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MEMORIALS

OF THE

REV. JOHN HENLEY,

Compiled by his Widow,

AND EDITED BY

THE REV. JOHN G. AVERY.

"THEM THAT HONOUR ME I WILL HONOUR."

PUBLISHED BY J. SHERREN, WEYMOUTH;
AND SOLD BY J. MASON, 14, CITY ROAD, AND 66, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

1856.

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BIBLIOTHECA

PREFACE.

THE Biography of persons eminent for piety and usefulness has always been highly esteemed in the church of Christ. It is calculated to magnify the riches of the grace of God, and to awaken in the bosom of the believer lively emotions of gratitude and confidence; nor does it less serve to illustrate the principles of the gospel in their personal and practical developement, to exhibit their loveliness, and to encourage the sincere Christian in his attempts to fulfil them. Hence the truly pious in every age have prized the memorials of departed excellence, and have assigned them a high position in the ranks of sacred literature.

The peculiar design of christian biography sufficiently defines the class of character which is its appropriate subject. It is intended not to amuse nor to astonish, but to teach; not to afford entertainment, but instruction in righteousness. It does not invite attention to the discoveries of science, the splendours of eloquence, the beautiful eccentricities of genius, or the sublimities of intellectual achievement; these, however admirable in themselves, and still more when sanctified by grace, yet are but subsidiary to its great design. It directs us not to what man is by nature, but to what he is made by redeeming grace. It delineates the condition of a soul dead, in common with the rest of Adam's race, in trespasses and sins; and it defines the mysterious process whereby the principle of grace is enkindled and increased, until it quickens it to newness of life, pervades and purifies it from sin, animates every faculty into active and generous exercise, fills the whole nature with heavenly love, elevates it into the likeness of God, and meetens it for the

inheritance of the saints in light. It constitutes, in fact, an animated description of "the life of God in the soul of man;" and all which elucidates this great subject falls within the peculiar province of the christian biographer. For this purpose, therefore, that character is the most eligible which is the most imitable; and the christian whose consistent piety has ennobled an humble and ordinary sphere;—who was less distinguished by uncommon endowments than by exemplary diligence;—whose attainments, while they resulted from the divine blessing, were made under no greater advantages than our own;—whose excellencies, while they do not discourage us by their perfection, animate us by their degree;—whose success teaches us not how to be great, but how to be holy, happy, and useful: such a christian is fitted to supply a portrait, the study of which will be more interesting and more instructive to the church of Christ, than the memorials of those whose elevated rank or distinguished talents removed them further from ordinary sympathies, or forbid the hope of successful imitation.

It is because the life of MR. HENLEY is believed to afford a beautiful example of this kind, that the following pages are submitted to the public. It is not intended to challenge for him the praise of transcendent abilities—of profound learning—or of that peculiar constitution of mind which sometimes opens up to an individual a path of usefulness accessible to none besides. His talents, though highly respectable, were not unequalled; and the sphere allotted him was only that of a laborious minister. But, on this very account, his biography is peculiarly instructive. In every part of the church in which he laboured, he was acceptable, beloved, and eminently useful.* Thousands cherish his memory with grateful veneration; and the memorial of his labours is recorded in immortal characters in the presence of angels and God.

* The late Rev. THEOPHILUS LESSEY remarked of him, that "he was one of the most efficient ministers which our connexion could ever boast of, and was the instrument of converting more sinners to God than perhaps any other minister of the present age."

What, then, was the secret of his success? What was the element of his greatness? It was that which *every* minister—nay, which *every christian* ought to aspire after and possess. It was his fervent piety—his deep devotedness to God. He lived a life of faith; his animating principle was love to God; he breathed the atmosphere of prayer and praise; he partook of the hidden manna, and drank of the water of life; he abode in "the secret place of the Most High," beneath "the shadow of the Almighty;" he was "strong in the Lord and the power of his might;" from the armoury of heaven he drew weapons of celestial temper, and thus successfully encountered the powers of darkness; his life was one great holocaust—a living sacrifice to God! And such may—nay, such ought every christian to become. Happy will it be for the reader of this volume, if its perusal induce him to follow so worthy an example.

The Editor is deeply sensible of his own incompetency to the task he has undertaken. The only apology which he has to offer is, that it was urged upon him by those whose judgment he was bound to respect, and whose wishes he was anxious to gratify. If he expresses in the strongest terms his personal attachment to Mr. HENLEY, it will not be wondered at, when he acknowledges that he owes to his instrumentality "his own self." It was through his powerful ministry and affectionate persuasion that he was led to seek the attainment of experimental religion: and words can but faintly represent the sense of obligation which this recollection inspires.

The materials for this volume were chiefly supplied and compiled by Mrs. Henley, who thus refers to it in a letter to the Editor.

"In compiling the memorials of one who will ever be *dearer* than life itself, I should say my only apology for so ardently desiring their publication, is the hope that good may be the result, and that the crown of the departed one may be rendered yet more glorious in consequence. Again and again has the work

been offered up to Him who sanctifieth the gift and the giver, with intense breathings that a blessing, *rich in its effects*, may accompany every page of it. It would be false delicacy even to seem to look with apprehension at the result of a perusal of letters and a journal written from the heart—the former with no expectation but that the eye of affection alone would rest upon them, and the latter without a thought the most remote (for the writer did not know but that all were destroyed) that human ken would ever inspect them—written with the single desire of glorifying God, by one whose whole soul was devoted to him; for God generally stamps such means with the signature of his approbation."

"My task has been pursued amid sufferings indescribable, when 'deep called unto deep.' Many tears have bedewed the pages; but amid my severest sorrows, recollections of the past yielded a melancholy, yet sweet relief. This will, however, account for any discrepancy or tautology which may occur. I dared not either trust myself to examine some manuscripts laid aside by his own hand, where other materials might have been found. In this rough state I place it, my dear friend, in your hands to do as you think proper with it, fully depending on your judgment, and satisfied that the long and devoted affection which subsisted between you and my precious husband, will not warp your opinion, nor influence your delineation of his character."

It has been the object of the Editor to give in the ensuing pages a faithful portraiture of his friend. In attempting this, he was desirous of neither confiding in his own impressions, nor in those of many excellent and highly esteemed friends of Mr. HENLEY, who have kindly transmitted sketches of his character. He preferred to make him, as far as possible, his own biographer —to preserve memorials, rather than to write a memoir. Extracts from Mr. HENLEY'S journal and correspondence have, therefore, been made, wherever they served to record his labours or illustrate his character; and remarks have been added only where they were deemed necessary to connect or elucidate the

narrative. Should any be tempted to suppose that some of these remarks savour of eulogy, and that the writer has merged the stern duty of the biographer in the tender partiality of the friend, his only reply is, that the volume will be extensively read by those to whom Mr. H. was intimately known, and they, he is well assured, will confirm their correctness.

It is matter of deep regret with the Editor, that he has been unable to insert any considerable part of Mr. HENLEY'S letters to himself. For a period of sixteen years he maintained a constant and most familiar correspondence with him; and the whole of his letters are carefully preserved. Many of them are beautiful and valuable in a high degree; but unhappily they are not at present accessible to him, and he is compelled to deny himself the gratification, and his readers the profit of their insertion. An apology may appear necessary to some of Mr. HENLEY'S colleagues, that more mention of their labours and usefulness is not made in connexion with his. Many of them were greatly successful in their ministry, while associated with him; and in relating the results of his labours, it is by no means intended to detract from theirs. But this volume relates to him alone, and to have diverged from this subject, (however agreeable to the Editor), would have been foreign to his province, and would have extended the work beyond its proper limits.

For the last mentioned reason also, it has been decided to omit the insertion of a printed list of the subscribers who have so kindly promoted this publication. The Editor respectfully tenders to them individually his most grateful thanks, and earnestly hopes that their perusal of these pages will not only afford them a temporary gratification, but will administer to their permanent profit, and thus promote the glory of God.

Barnstaple, May 14th, 1844.

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MEMORIALS

OF THE

REV. JOHN HENLEY.

CHAP. I.

"FROM A CHILD THOU HAST KNOWN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION, THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS."
II. TIM. III. 15.

Birth and Parentage—Childhood—Anecdote—Education—Hon. Miss G.—Anecdote—Attachment to Wesleyan Ministers—Conversion—Discouragement—Consistency—Commences a Sunday School—Endeavours to benefit his young Companions—Anecdote—Defective utterance—Growth in grace—Call to the Ministry—First attempt to preach—Becomes a Local Preacher—Extraordinary zeal—Flattering offer of preferment in the Established Church declined—Attachment to the Methodist ministry—Is recommended to the Conference by the Quarterly Meeting—Examined and Approved at the Exeter District Meeting—Sent to supply at South Petherton—Appointed to Dunster. 1800—24.

THE subject of these memorials was born at Torquay, in Devonshire, of respectable and pious parents, on the 28th of March, 1800. At the time of his birth the society of which he ultimately became so devoted a minister had not yet commenced its operations in his native town. The Wesleyan preachers had occasionally visited the neighbourhood; and, at a village about three miles distant, a house belonging to a relative of his family had been opened for preaching, and a small class formed, of which Mr. and Mrs. Henley, sen., were among the earliest members. To this place they were

accustomed constantly to conduct their family for public worship, and from a very early age the subject of these pages accompanied them thither.

It is confessedly unwise to attach great importance to the disposition and conduct of a child, nor can any safe inference be drawn from juvenile habits, as to the character which may be developed in riper years. In early youth reason is but imperfectly unfolded; the importance of correct principle is not understood; and the mind, left in a great degree to the guidance of its affections, is easily drawn aside from the path which conscience or authority may prescribe; so that the best of children will exhibit much of wayward inconstancy and indiscretion. An exact scrutiny of the conduct of a child might lead different observers to opposite conclusions, or rather would justify no conclusion at all. And yet it is certainly an innocent gratification, when reviewing the character of departed excellence, to trace a consistency in its distinctive features even up to early childhood;—to mark the first germ of principles which subsequent years so happily unfolded, and the budding of that flower which shed so sweet a fragrance in after life. In this view of it, great interest attaches to the early biography of JOHN HENLEY. He was a peculiarly amiable and intelligent child; and there was much in his early character to awaken expectation and give promise of that excellence which marked his maturer years. A lady, who was accustomed to take much notice of him, was one day conversing with him, almost as soon as he could speak plainly, about the creation of the world, and of the death of Christ upon the cross for our redemption, which, she told him, was a still more wonderful thing. The child listened with deep attention, and, looking up with much expression in his countenance, replied, "Oh yes, Ma'am—

> "'Twas great to speak a world from nought;
> 'Twas greater to redeem!'"

The lady had never heard the words before, and it will easily be believed that the impression produced on her mind by this incident was never obliterated. His unusual steadiness of conduct was the frequent subject of the admiration of his friends. At the age of nine

years, his father had sufficient confidence in him to send him a considerable distance into the country on horseback on business; and he was never found unworthy of the trust reposed in him. While at school, the assiduity with which he pursued his studies won for him the warm approbation of his masters. He had an ardent thirst for knowledge, and his mind readily apprehended and firmly retained the various subjects which engaged his attention; and this, added to a habit of untiring application, enabled him to excel most of his schoolfellows, and to lay a solid foundation for that store of general information which he acquired in after life.

The pious example of his parents, and the religious education with which he was blest, were not lost upon him. It was evident that he was frequently the subject of the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit; and his tenderness of conscience, his general seriousness, and his marked respect for the ordinances of religion, were the visible and happy results. There was something in his conversation, too, which was unlike boys in general. Having to call one day, while yet quite a lad, on the Hon. Miss G——, she was so charmed with his modest intelligence and his amiable demeanour, that after detaining him long she presented him with a bible, and affectionately watching him as he walked away, remarked to a friend, "That boy will certainly become one of the excellent of the earth."

When he was about thirteen years of age, the clergyman of the parish formed a school, in the management of which he was desirous to obtain the co-operation of serious persons of all denominations. JOHN HENLEY became one of the teachers, and by his constant attention and engaging manners with the children soon obtained a prominent position. The excellent minister himself was much struck with his earnest diligence, and the ingenious and intelligent manner in which he instructed his class; and having called on his father to thank him for permitting his son to attend the school, he remarked, "That boy will certainly become a minister." Many years afterwards this gentleman, who had in the interval removed to another locality, happening to be at Torquay, visited Mr. H., sen., and enquired for the boy who had interested him so much, and had

the gratification to learn that his prediction had been fulfilled.

The familiar intercourse which JOHN HENLEY at this period enjoyed with the Wesleyan ministers, who for many years were in the habit of visiting his father's house, and spending a day or two of every week there, had, undoubtedly, a powerful influence in forming his character. The visits of these excellent men were prized by the whole family; the period of their arrival was looked forward to with universal interest, and hailed with unfeigned delight; and by none more than by JOHN. He always manifested a reverence for the sacred office of the minister; was habitually serious and devout in public worship; and, as his leisure moments were devoted to reading and to the improvement of his mind, he gladly availed himself of every opportunity of enjoying the company and conversation of those from whom he could derive instruction. Hence he loved the society of the preachers, and in their journeys to neighbouring villages was their constant and agreeable companion.

Hitherto, however, though strictly moral in his conduct, and generally beloved for his amiable and affectionate disposition, he was a stranger to that inward and experimental change, the necessity of which the Redeemer insisted upon when conversing with Nicodemus:—he was not "born again." This work of the Holy Spirit, which is co-existent with a personal faith in Jesus Christ, which awakens the vital and active principle of love to God within the soul, and which defines the commencement of the life of grace, he had been always taught to regard as both desirable and necessary; and the occurrence of a general revival of religion in Torquay and its neighbourhood induced him, with many others, to seek the personal experience of it. The particulars of this happy event are thus recorded by himself.

"During the revival at Torquay, in 1813, I was brought to feel the necessity of obtaining a personal interest in the blood of Christ I was the child of parents devoted to God; my religious advantages had been great, far above many. I had been accustomed to attend the Wesleyan ministry; so that, with gratitude

I say it, I never recollect the period in my childhood when I was not favoured with religious impressions. But at this time my mind was more deeply wrought upon at a lovefeast at Barton; after that, at Torquay; and it was by witnessing the concern which others appeared to be under for their souls, wrestling and praying for the pardon of sin, that I was led to think that what they were seeking so earnestly, and in fact what some of them obtained, I needed as much as they. I began to lament that I could not feel the same serious concern, and I may say, 'It grieved me, that I grieved no more.' This feeling increased, until I feared it was of no use for me to expect to enjoy a sense of pardon until I felt more of the burden of my sins. Yet I was conscious of some degree of sincere contrition for sin, and I earnestly desired forgiveness for it, and power to sin no more. I went on attending preaching or prayer meeting every night for a week, and on the Sunday morning following, I accompanied another youth to the chapel at five o'clock; and there, kneeling on the stones in the porch while some one prayed (for I felt unworthy to go further in,) God enabled me to trust on the merits of Jesus Christ for forgiveness; and in doing so, He set my soul at liberty —at glorious liberty. These words were powerfully impressed on my mind, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' I was enabled by faith to lay hold on the promise, and was immediately constrained to sing,

'O for a thousand tongues to sing,' &c.

Oh! that place is precious to me: the very stones are sacred. I was afterwards much harassed by doubts and fears whether I had not been deceived; but on having recourse to a throne of grace, my faith was established."

In after life he often mentioned a circumstance which occurred whilst he was seeking God:—A young man, a servant in his father's house, promised to take him to a class meeting with him: he went, but the following week, on going to bed very weary, he fell asleep on his knees; the youth seeing him in this state was so much displeased with him, that he said it should be a long time before he would take him to the class

again. He felt this very keenly; wept bitterly over it; and said that, had it been possible, he would have watched nights together rather than lose the privilege. There was in it no intentional irreverence; and though he had gone to sleep, even then his desires were for God's mercy. This incident taught him a lesson of kindness and forbearance towards young persons, which he never ceased to remember. He attached much importance to evidences of early piety; and if a *general* conscientiousness marked the character of a child, he was not disposed to condemn it for trifling deviations.

He had now found the Saviour, and he never afterwards lost a sense of His forgiving love. But important as was the change thus effected in his personal experience and his religious principles, the propriety of his former conduct to a great extent prevented the hallowing results of it from being remarked by any but those who witnessed his more private deportment. To them the genuine character of his religion was satisfactorily demonstrated. The bible was his constant companion, and closet duties were his delight. His temper and spirit evinced his uniform recollection of the presence of God. His conversation was guarded and spiritual; and all who were associated with him acknowledged the grace of God in him.

He now became a very useful member of the society, and was ready for every good work. In conjunction with his excellent sister, he formed the first Sunday School which was established at Torquay, and he never ceased to feel the deepest interest in it, and to devote his zealous exertions to it as long as he remained there. His attendance upon the ordinances of religion was punctual and uniform; and, not content with the usual routine of services, he was wont along with a few others to rise very early in the morning, and to assemble in a place of retirement for singing and prayer.

He paid great attention to the sermons he heard, and was accustomed to preserve copious notes of them in short hand, with reflections and observations of his own. A thick and closely written volume of this kind is preserved, and is an interesting memento of his intelligence and assiduity. There are literally hundreds of outlines; and the original remarks appended to them are frequently striking, just, and beautiful.

His affectionate spirit and engaging manners rendered him a most agreeable companion; and as he, in common with every member of his family, possessed a remarkable taste for music, and had a good voice, his society was much courted and greatly prized by many who were strangers to religion. But though eminently fitted to appreciate the pleasurers of friendship, he preserved his religious consistency. To his young companions he constantly recommended religion both by word and example; and many of the associates of his early days date their conversion to God to his instrumentality. The persevering pains which he bestowed on one of his young friends, was remarked upon by his excellent mother, who had frequently expressed her fears lest his society should prove injurious to her son. She told him at length, she believed "he was determined to take —— to heaven with him, even if he carried him all the way."

Though he was from the period of his conversion to God indefatigable in doing good, and though a life of eminent piety and usefulness was predicted of him by all who knew him, it was believed that he would never be fit for the office of the ministry. It was, indeed, matter of painful regret with his friends, that with sincere piety, ardent zeal, and a knowledge of divine things which was justly deemed extraordinary, he did not possess that fluency of utterance which was requisite for the work to which in other respects he was so eminently adapted. This was then incorrectly supposed to arise from a physical defect in the organs of speech, but proved in fact to be merely a nervous affection, which in the course of time entirely disappeared. The Lord had graciously entrusted to him a dispensation of the gospel, and seasonably removed every impediment to the acceptable and successful exercise of it.

Before his duty in this respect, however, was made plain, he was led to feel the need of a more entire consecration of himself to God. It is not unfrequently the case, that the young christian, though preserving his piety, and maintaining general consistency of conduct, yet relaxes his earnestness, and abates his zeal, after he has for some time followed the path of peace. The good seed of the word, which springs at first in luxu-

riance and beauty, sometimes suffers many a withering check, though in spite of all it may ultimately issue in an abundant harvest. Thus it was with the subject of these pages. The course of his religious experience about this time he thus describes:—

"The first two or three years after my becoming a member of the society, I believe I was much more alive to God, and more conscientious in my conduct, than the two subsequent years, though I am not aware of having brought disgrace on the cause of religion; nor could I ever allow myself to neglect the means of grace, preaching, prayer meetings, and class meetings, in which I was often quickened; and had it not been for the latter, with all the advantages I have had, I might now have been 'without God and without hope in the world.' I am astonished that my conscience should have been so blinded as to have allowed me to read so many unprofitable books, and to spend so much time in trifling company and conversation. I permitted my attention to be too much drawn away with young people. *I see—I feel*—I lost much time in such society. This was a great hindrance to the improvement of my mind as well as my heart, and no doubt to my usefulness too. I had a love for reading, but it was biassed a wrong way, and that naturally led to levity."

But God graciously showed him the sin and folly of this. He had also "foolishly allowed," he says, his affections to be placed on one who had the semblance of piety, and this connexion was very prejudicial to his spiritual interests. He became convinced that all this *must* be given up, and resolved to sacrifice every thing which led him astray from God.

"From that time," he writes, "I began to live nearer to God; having set out afresh for heaven, it appeared as though the effort I had made in breaking off all connexion with the person in question, was the necessary step to growth in grace and usefulness. I had occasionally prayed in public, but was very timid; and though often pressed on to exercise in exhorting, I could not be persuaded. I had begun to have liberty in prayer, and now about the time of my 'laying aside every weight,' I was brought into the

work that I had long had a desire for. After attempting to speak a word for God in a village about four or five miles from home, it was soon spread around that I had become a preacher, and the people accepting my labours and expressing themselves as profited, I entered into the work with all my heart."

He had been for a considerable time in the habit of reading sermons to congregations in country places when disappointed of a preacher; but this first attempt to preach, to which he has adverted above, was made at the request of his father, who was appointed to a village near Torquay, but was unable to go. Having a conviction that it was the duty of his son to employ his talents in this way, he thought it a favourable opportunity for him to begin. JOHN was very timid, and hesitated. His little sister, a child not five years old, who heard what was passing, looked up, and with amusing simplicity said, "John, do try, for you have gone so long to chapel, and heard so many sermons, that if you cannot preach now, you will never be able." His scruples, however, were at length overcome, and he went and preached with considerable freedom, and much to the pleasure and profit of those who heard him.

His own account of the commencement of his labours as a preacher is as follows:—

"I had been occasionally reading sermons for about twelve months in a country place, and was often persuaded by ministers and others to lay these aside and to preach myself. I frequently felt it a duty to do so, but a consciousness of my weakness kept me back. At this time I had intended to read a sermon of Whitfield's for Whitsunday; but on looking it over I feared it was not exactly suitable. At the same time a passage of scripture was brought to my mind, 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;' and I thought I could certainly say something from it that might be useful. With much fear and trembling I made the attempt, praying that God would convince me if I were called to the work by giving me liberty to speak. I found great freedom, and the people requested me not to read again. I then thought it impossible that I could preach anywhere else; yet I was gradually introduced from one place to another, and at length received on the plan as a local preacher."

In his earlier attempts he was guilty of a fault very common to young preachers—that of selecting as texts, passages, the scope and depth of which it needs maturity in knowledge and experience to apprehend and unfold. His first text at Torquay was an example of this. He preached from I. John iv., 8—"*God is love;*" and it will not be wondered at that in after years he expressed astonishment at his own presumption, and was humbled at the recollection of it.

Having now entered upon the work of a local preacher, he devoted himself to it with his accustomed zeal and earnestness. He frequently took long journeys into the country, and after preaching once or twice in the chapel to which he was appointed, would preach once, twice, or even three times in the open air. He often visited villages where as yet the Methodists had not penetrated, and after calling upon the people from house to house, took his stand under the shelter of a tree, or in any other eligible spot, and preached; and there is not perhaps a hamlet near Torquay, which has not in this way witnessed his indefatigable zeal and labours. Nor was he less diligent at home. At the early prayer meetings, at the ordinary public services, at the class meeting, in the Sunday School, he was always among the earliest and most regular.

Having a fine ear for music, and being a correct and tasteful performer on several instruments, he was always deemed an acquisition to the choir of the chapel at Torquay, and seldom failed to attend the meetings for practice. In these he took care to repress unseemly levity, and to lead those who attended them to "sing to the praise and glory of God;" and in his general intercourse with the young, his cheerful spirit, his affectionate manners, his amiable temper, and his consistent and ardent piety, threw around him a fascination which united all hearts to him, and rendered him the object of universal admiration. Indeed it might truly be said of him, that in all his public duties and equally in his private walk and conduct, he was "unto God a sweet savour of Christ."

He had not slackened in diligence in his business, but his venerable father remarks, "His heart was not [illegible] He did everything to the utmost of my wishes,

but yet I could perceive he would not do for business. His whole soul was in the work of God. A sense of duty rendered him scrupulously attentive to secular concerns; but he evidently rejoiced when he could lay them aside, and be in his element again." He appeared to imbibe the spirit of Him who said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." He was eminently fitted for nobler employments, and his path of duty began now to be made plain before him. About this time a lady (the Honourable——) and her brothers, who were much attached to him, offered to procure for him every collegiate assistance necessary to enable him to enter the ministry in the established church, and to get him regularly inducted into a living in the gift of the family. This flattering offer he respectfully declined. Though he felt the extreme kindness of the friends by whom it had been made, yet he said, "If God call me to preach, my home is among the Methodists. Through them I was first led to seek God. 'This people shall be my people.' However much I respect the church, I prefer Methodism; and the height of my ambition, when a child not five years old, was to become one day a Methodist preacher." And who can wonder at it? The Methodist ministers had been his father's guests; and from his infancy his happiest days had been spent in their company. He had been accustomed to look on them, and on his justly valued parents, with feelings of profound reverence. These feelings had grown with his growth, and could he now forsake those amongst whom his youth's "brightest days" had been passed? Even to the last he retained these early emotions, and endeavoured to fix the impression on the minds of his own children—that the servants of God were entitled to the highest honour; and not many weeks before he joined the church triumphant, when a very young minister had come unexpectedly to pass a night at his house, he said to Mrs. H., "Can we not give him up our own room" (as their spare room was occupied)? "I think we should prepare our *very best* for the ministers of God, and he is one."

His love, his respect, his veneration for his parents were great indeed, and well they deserved it. Long

will their names be held sacred when they have joined their departed son.

He was not long suffered to remain in the limited and retired sphere of a local preacher. The persuasion that he was called to be set apart to the ministry, and intended for extraordinary usefulness in it, was entertained by all who knew him, and could not but impress his own mind. Having been proposed at the March Quarterly Meeting of his circuit, according to the usage of the Methodist church, he was unanimously and cordially recommended to the Conference as a candidate for the sacred office. Speaking of this, he says:—

"I had impressions that I should one day preach, despite of reason to the contrary. But from my view of the importance of the work and my want of abilities for it, I used to attribute the impression to the effect of the conversation of some of my friends, who were often telling me I should certainly be a preacher. These persons I thought, and still think, were much mistaken in me. But I believe I should have been called into the work long before I was, had I lived nearer to God."

At the Exeter District Meeting, where he was examined, (May 26, 1824,) he thus expressed his views on the subject of his call to the ministry:—"My desire to be given up to the Lord has been ardent—intense. If I know my own heart, my only object is to deliver my soul. The subject of my call to the ministry has often been mentioned to me; and the duty has been repeatedly urged upon me, of offering myself for this service; but I could not bring my mind to yield. I have, however, at length consented; and I trust, if received, I shall be faithful."

He was examined and approved of at the District Meeting, and soon after called out temporarily to fill the place of a preacher in the South Petherton circuit. There he laboured to preach the gospel, according to the ability God had given him, and says:—"I have to bless him for liberty in preaching, and some little success."

At the Conference of 1824, he was appointed to the Dunster circuit, and entered formally upon the arduous

and responsible but delightful duties of a Methodist minister. His qualifications were of a sterling character and of superior order. His heart was entirely devoted to God; his life was consecrated to his service. His call to the ministry was clear and unquestionable, and his whole soul appeared to adopt the apostolical injunction to Archippus—"Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

CHAP. II.

"THY VOWS ARE UPON ME, O GOD; I WILL RENDER PRAISES UNTO THEE."—PSALM LV. 12.

Dunster—Spiritual destitution—Methodism—Robert Moore, Esq. —Mr. Henley appointed—Journal—Self-examination—Letter —Zeal and diligence in his ministry—Intellectual improvement—United prayer for the revival of the work—On fasting —Journal—Mrs. B.—Anecdote of Mr. Wesley and Mr. S.— Holnicott—Mr. Giles and the Baronet—Address to Sailors —Birthday—Letter—Letters on the Doctrines, &c., of the Methodists—Christian Perfection—Universality of the Atonement—Grace given to all—Final Perseverance examined— Duty of Christian communion—Conclusion. 1824—25.

THE town of Dunster is situated in a beautiful valley, near the coast of the Bristol channel, in the west of Somerset. Nature has lavished her bounties around it with unsparing hand. The climate is mild and salubrious, the soil unusually fertile, and the scenery varied and lovely beyond description.

These natural advantages formed, however, a striking and painful contrast to the moral and spiritual state of the inhabitants of that neighbourhood, at the time to which this narrative refers. Throughout the whole district, with one or two exceptions, an evangelical ministry in the church was unknown; and besides a very small congregation or two of Baptists, no form of dissent existed. That in these circumstances spiritual destitution prevailed, cannot be matter of surprise. In the emphatic language of scripture, "gross darkness" covered the minds of the people. The Methodist preachers had visited the neighbourhood occasionally for many years, and small societies had been formed at Holnicott and Carhampton; and the names of Mr. Jones, Mr. Giles, Mr. Stoate, and Mr. Symons of Bilbrook, will long be cherished in that vicinity as the consistent and zealous supporters of the infant cause. In the year 1811, Dunster was made the head of a

circuit; and two preachers were, for many succeeding years stationed there. Unhappily, however, the work did not prosper as its devoted friends anticipated, and the second preacher was ultimately withdrawn. The minds of the people, generally, were enveloped in a "darkness which might be felt." The popular prejudices against Methodism were active and bitter; and the hostile influence of the wealthy and great contributed to oppose formidable obstacles to the spread of the truth. These things served to exercise the faith of the people of God, and to draw out their souls in earnest prayers that he would prosper his own cause. The prayer was heard. In the year 1823, Robert Moore, Esq., of the parish of Dunster, died, and bequeathed the sum of £50 per annum to trustees for the purpose of assisting in the support of the ministry in that circuit. At the same time, a gracious feeling was awakened in the minds of many young persons; the work of God experienced a general impulse; and openings for preaching in several places in the neighbourhood presented themselves. Thus encouraged, the friends determined on applying to the Conference to restore their second preacher; and in consequence of this application, Mr. HENLEY was sent to the circuit, along with the Rev. Richard Shepherd.

From this it will be seen that Mr. Henley's sphere was likely to prove arduous and responsible. The district of country in which he was to labour was very extensive, and the more remote parts of it were bleak and exposed in an unusual degree. The inhabitants were thinly scattered over it, and their prejudices against religion were deep-rooted and strong. Many places had never been visited at all by a Wesleyan minister, and many more had been attempted without success. Besides this, the expectations of the people, excited by their altered circumstances and the appointment of a second preacher, were raised very high, so that much was evidently looked for from him. They were, however, not disappointed.

Mr. Henley entered on his work with a singleness of eye, a steadiness of purpose, and an energy of zeal which surmounted every obstacle; and both through his instrumentality, and that of his excellent and ven-

erated colleague, the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. Just before his entering on his circuit, the following passage occurs in his journal, which may serve to illustrate the state of his mind.

"July 12.—Preached from 'The Spirit itself beareth witness, &c.;' afterwards went to church, heard Mr. L., 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' Went to C—— in the afternoon, found a tolerable company, to whom I spoke from 'And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' Had an excellent lovefeast after: many related their experience, all enjoying a sense of pardon, and one of sanctification: concluded with

'Come let us use the grace divine,' &c.

Requested that they would all consider the words, and if they did not intend to use them with their hearts to sit down and not mock God in His house. Every one appeared to be solemnly engaged in the service. On returning home I was led to examine myself closely, with regard to my own religion. Doubts and fears were suggested to my mind, as to the genuineness of my christian experience; and as the subject passed before me, I asked, 'What is my religion worth to me? What could I spare it for? and I was enabled to answer from conviction, it was worth more than the whole world. Small as my attainments are, I can say, God is my Father—Christ is my Saviour—the Spirit is my guide and Comforter, and heaven is my home."

Mr. Henley was cordially welcomed by the friends in the Dunster circuit. His labours proved generally acceptable, and his ardent piety, affectionate temper, and beautiful simplicity of character, speedily endeared him to all who became acquainted with him. He thus relates the commencement of his ministry in a letter to a friend.

"Dunster, September 20, 1824.

"I find, I assure you, that I have not the leisure I expected. A Methodist preacher's life is very far from an inactive one; and this circuit is unfavourable for mental improvement. Plans which I had proposed to myself for husbanding my time, I find to be impracticable; but I bless God I have increasing delight in the

employment to which (however unworthy) He has called me—that of making known the unsearchable riches of Christ. I commenced my ministry in the circuit town, by preaching from Gal. vi., 14, 'God forbid that I should glory,' &c., and I bless God this is my resolution. I do count it a great honour to be so situated —that

"'Tis all my business here below
To cry—Behold the Lamb!'

"I have an excellent superintendent, and the friends at whose houses we lodge are very kind. We find the congregations and societies small, but we are not without hope that God will revive His work. Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may be glorified."

The sacred work to which he was thus devoted, he prosecuted with an energy and perseverance truly surprising. His regular appointments on the Sabbath were usually to preach three times in as many places; and he frequently had to ride or even walk several miles in the course of the day. Yet not content with this, he would attend the morning prayer meeting at seven o'clock, visit the Sunday School after breakfast, preach out of doors, once or even oftener, in the adjacent villages, and perhaps hold one or more prayer meetings after evening service. His diligence in pastoral duties was equally exemplary. He was wont to visit every family who attended the chapel in Dunster once a week; and the houses of the poor, the workhouse, &c., also constantly shared his attention. In his journeys around the circuit, which were often long and fatiguing, he was accustomed to call at the houses of the members of the society which lay in his way, and generally would furnish hinself with a number of tracts, which he distributed to persons whom he met on the road, or left at the cottages by the way side. He took care to arrive at his country appointments early, that he might be able to pursue the same plan in the places where he preached; and he would often call on every family in a village before preaching, and announce and invite them to attend the service. Nor were his visits at any time matters of form and compliment. He never forgot that he was *a minister*, nor lost sight of his mission and duty. After the interchange of friendly greetings, he

was wont at once to enter upon spiritual things, and urge the necessity of personal and entire devotedness, with a simplicity of language and a fervour of affection which were often irresistible. Every member of the family, if possible, participated his care. He would take the young aside, follow the servants into the kitchen, and evince a deep interest in the welfare of all. Many who read these pages will doubtless recollect such incidents, and remember with the writer when and how they were, under his affectionate expostulations, led to exclaim—

"Nay, but I yield, I yield,
I can hold out no more."

If at any of the services he noticed a person apparently under serious concern for his spiritual state, he would go to him as soon as the meeting ended, and by close personal conversation endeavour to give permanence to the gracious impression. It might be truly said of him, that "daily in the temple and in every house, he ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Nor was he neglectful of his own intellectual improvement, while thus indefatigably engaged in his great work. He was a very diligent student. He usually took a few volumes with him in his journeys; and by early rising, and by a habit of carefully husbanding his time, he succeeded in pursuing a regular course of theological study. His sermons were in general, carefully prepared, though he would occasionally venture on an extemporaneous effort. But most commonly the clearness of his exposition, his nice and accurate definitions of doctrine, and his forcible argumentation, sufficiently denoted the pains which he had bestowed in preparing for the pulpit. He was "a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

At the September Quarterly Meeting of the circuit, it was resolved that the next Quarterly Fast of the societies should be especially observed as a season of humiliation and of united prayer for the revival of the work. On this occasion, the following entry occurs in his journal, which may serve to illustrate and confirm the preceding remarks :—

"OCTOBER 1ST, 1824.—This is our Quarterly Fast

—a day of humiliation and prayer to God for a more abundant outpouring of his Spirit on the church and the world. I have been led to think on the subject of fasting, and to enquire whether it be the duty of a christian under the gospel dispensation to abstain from food. Bringing the subject to the test of scripture, I find that Jesus gives directions for fasting; and, on some particular occasions, it seems the primitive christians did fast, and the propriety of this appears to be suggested by the words of Christ, 'This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.' At the same time it does not strike me that there is any positive precept on the subject. The direction given is to be temperate, 'to abstain from blood and things offered to idols.' So that though not a positive duty, it is indirectly prescribed. Bringing it to the test of tradition, we hear that very early in the christian church this practice was attended to by the most pious men and useful ministers. The first Methodists were strict in their observance of it, and God did especially bless the labour of such men. Then again, there are many holy and useful persons who do not practice it: hence I conclude that it is not an indispensable, but a profitable means of grace. Coming to the test of reason, it seems we are in such danger of becoming sensual and seeking gratification too much from the gratifying our appetites, that, as an act of self-denial, it is certainly a christian duty. Denying ourselves occasionally, in this way, may have a tendency to wean us from the world and lead us to look higher for enjoyment. It may be calculated to promote self-examination, which worketh humility, and humility faith, faith love, and so all the christian graces; so that we become crucified to the world with its affections and lusts. At the same time, God has sent the good things of life (which we should receive with thankfulness) to promote vigour of body and mind, so that abstinence should be observed so as not to weaken either one or the other. Coming to experience, by the advice of many whose piety made me pay great deference to their judgment, I have on certain occasions abstained from food, and have found it profitable to my soul; but I have reason to suspect that my constitution will not bear it, as it has produced

extreme languor and head ache. On the whole, however, I am led to think, that when the duties of the day do not require much bodily exertion, and when the constitution is tolerably good, it will be found to be a very profitable mean of grace, in the observance of which we may expect the blessing of God, not in a way of reward but as a channel. We have reason to believe the great obstacle to our obtaining those larger measures of grace for which we pray, is not that God is not disposed to give them, but that we are not prepared to receive them. I find fasting is calculated to fit the mind for the reception of these blessings. I have been much humbled and drawn out in prayer to God this day especially (as it is the first fast day since I have been given up to the ministry), that He would condescend to make me useful to immortal souls. I have to a degree kept from food, though not entirely; I had much head ache, but my mind was so exercised on the subject, that what I did take was with great trembling, and not for my gratification; and on making it the subject of prayer, I feel no condemnation, only a deep sense of my obligation to God and of my own ingratitude. I am determined through grace, to give myself up to live for His glory. May He help me to fulfil this resolution, for the sake of Christ. Amen and amen."

Though no immediate outpouring of the Holy Spirit of a very remarkable kind followed on this observance, there was a general awakening throughout the circuit, and hopes of better days were generally entertained. Mr. Henley was among the most sanguine, and the expectation seemed to impart a fresh impulse to his zeal. Day after day he visited new places, or re-opened those which had been tried and abandoned. Every way and in all things, he aimed at the attainment of the object he so passionately desired. It might be emphatically said of him,

> "For this alone he lived below,
> The power of godliness to shew,
> The wonders wrought by Jesu's name!"

The following extracts from his journal will be read with interest:—

"JANUARY 6, 1825.—Preached from Job xvi., 22.

Felt much impressed with the necessity of being prepared for death. To the christian, death opens a bright and glorious prospect of endless progression in happiness and glory.

"16.—Preached from Heb, x., 24, 25; then went to church. In the afternoon preached again to a good congregation; felt much liberty, and was deeply affected with the necessity of an immediate attention to the things which make for peace. How short is life!—short when compared with the eternity that must have preceded and that must follow;—short when compared with the lives of the antediluvians—with the work allotted us to perform. This is a natural consequence of the fall, and is itself a proof of the universal extent of the curse. We need not reason much, or quote scripture to prove the proposition; facts, solemn, numerous, repeated, prove it. O! to be diligent in the cause of God, for 'Time is short.' O Lord, forgive my secret sins. Did the world know all the workings of my mind, how unfit should I appear to exercise the office of a christian minister! O thou, who art well acquainted with my heart, and by whose grace alone these inward workings have been prevented from breaking out, give me more of that sin-killing and soul cleansing influence: 'Cleanse thou the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit!'

"WATCHET, 18.—Concluded a series of sermons on the character and privileges of a disciple.—John viii., 31, 32.

"BILBROOK, 19.—How mercifully does God deal with me! I am sadly deficient—greatly so in point of private devotion; and yet God has graciously granted me much of the spirit of my duty in my public ministrations, whilst enlarging on christian liberty and praying for it. Help me, O my Father, to 'stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free,' and grant, oh! grant the Spirit of perfect liberty—of liberty from sin! Found much power in exhibiting the privilege of believers to realize the promise of the Spirit as a seal and pledge of future glory.

"24.—Read the bible until breakfast. Mrs. B. (a stranger to religion) came in and remained during prayer. Afterwards I observed to her, 'Half an hour

spent in this way is not lost time.' With tears she said, 'Religion is after all the best thing.' 'Yes, truly it is the best thing,' I remarked; 'it consoles us in difficulties; is a soother of the ills, and a sweetener of the joys of life.' Poor woman! she appeared to feel every word when exhorted to seek peace in God After she had gone, I understood she had had a son, nine years old, who hung himself, and a husband long afflicted with cancer, of which he died, leaving her a widow with eight children and a large farm to manage. May God grant her a sanctified use of these trying dispensations!

"25.—A very wet and long walk to Watchet. Preached from 2 Cor. iv., 18. In the evening Mr. K. related the following anecdote of Mr. Wesley and Mr. S——, a clergyman then at Brent. They had been fellow collegians. On one occasion, while at college, they were about to sit down to dinner with sixteen others, when Mr. Wesley proposed that they should fast and send their dinner to the prison, which was done. Mr. W. in the latter part of his life called on Mr. S., who observed to him, 'Ah! John, we are the only two left of the eighteen that fasted at your suggestion and sent the dinner to the prisoners.' 'Yes, George,' was the reply; 'and you have lived so long to little purpose not to have grown too wise to write such a book as that of yours;' alluding to one in which the doctrine of universalism was advocated. 'I thought,' said Mr. S., 'you would have eaten it up at a mouthful, but you have never answered it yet.' 'That is no proof that I cannot,' rejoined his friend; 'if I could account to God for my time, I would have answered it long ago.'

"27.—Met the Sunday School children; addressed them on the reason why they should love and fear God, particularly on the principle of that scripture, 'Fear Him who hath power to cast *both body and soul into hell.*"

"WATCHET, 28.—Text, Isaiah lv., 7, 8. For the first time I believe, I entered immediately on my text; and for the first time read the service without blundering. Felt greatly fatigued, but very happy in my work.

"29.—A very pleasant walk to Lynch, over the highest land in Somerset. Preached from Isaiah xxxiii., 16, 17. Visited old Betty Moore, rejoicing in the midst

of affliction and with death in prospect; she is very weak, but could still exclaim, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul!' She seemed overcome with the mercy of God in sparing her so long, while in darkness and sin; and at length, in the eleventh hour, calling her from 'darkness into His marvellous light.' She had been a long time labouring under the burden of sin, and thought she must do some great thing for herself; 'But oh! said she, 'I never shall forget when I heard that word, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." My heart rejoiced, and I wept for joy and love.' I prayed with her: on leaving, she grasped my hand with both hers, and with tears expressed her gratitude for the visit, saying, 'God bless you, my dear sir, wherever you go.' Yes, it is a blessing to have the prayers of the pious poor!

"30.—Preached at Holnicot."

At Holnicot, the preachers were heartily welcomed and kindly entertained at the house of the late Mr. Giles, a person too remarkable in himself, and too closely connected with the introduction and support of Methodism in this part of Somerset, not to deserve a passing notice. Mr. G. was a tanner in extensive business, and of industrious and economical habits. He possessed extraordinary physical strength, so that though Bristol was 60 miles from his house, he would frequently walk the whole distance and accomplish the journey in a single day. Having heard Mr. Wesley preach on one of his visits to Taunton, Mr. G. was convinced of sin and led earnestly to seek and happily to obtain the salvation of God. He now became anxious that the Methodists should visit his neighbourhood, and opened his own house for preaching, arrangements having been made to supply it occasionally in connection with the Taunton circuit. Other houses at Carhampton, Bilbrook, and Williton, were also offered; and several societies were formed, which became the nucleus and origin of what is now the Dunster circuit. Meanwhile Mr. Giles, having realized a moderate competency, resigned his business to his nephew and retired into private life. Unhappily his nephew did not succeed, became embarrassed in his circumstances, and involved Mr. Giles to such an extent, that a considerable part

of the property which he had laid by was lost. The result was, that his means became very limited, barely adequate to maintain him in decency and comfort. In these altered circumstance, however, Mr. G. at once exhibited the genuineness of his religion and experienced its value. His love to God abounded more and more; and while his earthly supplies were abridged, his faith rested more calmly, and expatiated more gloriously, in the hope of a heavenly inheritance.

The language of complaining was strange to his lips, but his heart ceaselessly overflowed in thanksgiving and gratitude to God. His house was situated near the estate of Sir Thomas ——, bart.; and in former days Mr. G., having extensive business, had been wont frequently to cash checks, &c., for him. After his reverses, Sir Thomas kindly visited him, and was conversing with him on his late misfortune. "Well, Mr. Giles," said he, good humouredly, "I suppose you could not cash a check for me now, if I wanted it?" "No, Sir Thomas, I may almost claim fellowship with the apostles in that respect, and say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" Sir Thomas: "Well, you must feel very painfully the change in your circumstances." Mr. G.: No, indeed, Sir Thomas, I think I am almost as rich as you are still." Sir Thomas: "As rich as I am! what do you mean?" Mr. G.: "Why, Sir Thomas, I have food to eat, clothes to wear, a house to cover me, a contented mind, and the love of God in my heart; and *what have you more, Sir Thomas?*" "Ah!" replied the Baronet thoughtfully, "would I had as much!"

In accosting a friend, especially one whom he knew to be a christian, he would usually enquire, "Well, what were you thinking about when I met you? *I* was thinking of this passage, ——;" and would then give his views of the text he had been dwelling on, and introduce matter for profitable conversation. In this house Mr. H. was always peculiarly welcome; and he much delighted in the society of the venerable old man.

"JAN. 29.—The eve of another Sabbath. Oh, prepare me for the duties of the coming day. Direct me, O God of infinite wisdom, in my choice of subjects, and what to say. I feel on the whole a calm composure of mind, and of increasing confidence in the promises of God,

both for personal grace and ministerial qualifications. Praise the Lord! Amen.

"30.—Preached at half-past nine; 'Continue ye in my love.' Afterwards heard an excellent sermon in the church, from the parable of the labourers in the vineyard: there seemed to be nothing wanting but energy. At half-past two, at Lynch, 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.' Walked to Dunster, and at six preached from Zec. xii., 8. Met the class after service. Bless the Lord for liberty in my work! This has been a Sabbath to my soul, though a day of much labour.

"FEBRUARY 4, 1825.—A profitable day. Was much blessed in the evening from Psalm xxxiv., 18, and have seldom found more liberty.

"6.—An address to sailors. Requested them to consider, first, they were immortal—must live in a future state after the body dies; secondly, they were accountable—their future state would be happy or miserable, determinable on their present conduct; thirdly, they were sinners, and consequently on the principle of strict justice as well as right reason, they were exposed to eternal misery; fourthly, they were helpless, and could do nothing of themselves to change their hearts, or recommend them to God's favour, so as to escape the curse of transgression; fifthly, Jesus Christ died for them to procure them pardon and grace to change their hearts; sixthly, they must repent in order to partake of the benefits of the Saviour's death.

"11.—On Monday, walked to Watchet, and met the children and singers.—Tuesday, met the teachers, &c. —Thursday, at the parsonage; very poorly; had a bad cough, which to-day is worse. Walked to Cleeve at night. Heard a pleasing account of the revival at Bridgewater.

"27 (the Sabbath).—At Washford. I believe I never felt so much liberty and power in expostulating with sinners as this morning, from 'One thing is needful,' &c. The people seemed to feel. May God give his blessing! As soon as I had finished, a venerable old class-leader (Mr. Symons) rose and observed, 'This, my friends, is a loud and powerful call; and now the Spirit of God is striving with you, decide and join us.

We want your help; perhaps you may never again feel as you do now.' I could not help beginning again, and urging to immediate decision on the Lord's side.

"Afternoon at Watchet: 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.'—Evening: 'How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious.' At the beginning felt rather confused, but found liberty towards the end. Had a very lively prayer meeting after preaching.

"MARCH 19.—A letter from my father. What changes take place in a little time! The withering grass and fading flower are fit emblems of the brevity of human life. This text has been a source of comfort, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' Went round the village with tracts: one poor woman told me she had been to the chapel to hear preaching, but she thought some one had told me all about her, for my sermon was entirely to her: 'Surely,' she said, 'you *must* have been told!'

"28.—My birthday. Twenty-five years old, and what do I know? What have I done? Alas! I just know sufficient to discover my own ignorance; and as to what I have done, I believe the greater part had better have been left undone. However, if I have not done much for myself, God has done much for me, and this deserves my gratitude.

"'O! to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be!'

"About twelve years of my life I have been a member of the Methodist society. A very unprofitable one indeed.

"APRIL 1 (Good Friday).—My mind was much solemnized this morning in the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ; took for my text, 'Father, forgive them.' Felt in the evening intimidated at the thought of preaching again; however, after going into the pulpit, soon overcame fear and timidity, and found great freedom from 'We preach Christ crucified.' After sermon had the privilege I have long desired of receiving the sacrament. I do not think I ever attended this ordinance without having my soul quickened; and it was the case especially this evening. Mr. Shepherd gave a most animated address before distributing the

emblems of the dying love of Christ. I bless God I had such a lively view of the Saviour, that I could say, 'Whom having not seen I love!'

"3.—Preached at half-past nine from 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' At Porlock, at half-past one, in the street, to a large congregation: 'Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise,' &c. Lynch at three o'clock: 'And with great power gave witness of the resurrection of Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.' Walked to Dunster, and heard Mr. Bond from 'The end of all things is at hand.'

"6.—Visited Blue-anchor rocks with some friends and was much gratified. Preached at Washford, 'Blessed are they which have not seen and yet have believed.'"

Mr. HENLEY'S correspondence with his friends breathed the same spirit of ardent concern for the salvation of souls, which shone forth in his public and pastoral labours. The following was addressed to a gentleman who had been one of his early associates, and was still the subject of his affectionate anxiety.

"Dunster, March, 1825.

"In my walk this morning it occurred to me that I had promised to write my old friend ——, and that it was high time to fulfil that promise. Then my mind was instantaneously carried back to other days;—the morning prayer meetings and evening conversations. 'These were golden days!' I exclaimed to myself; but alas! how soon at an end. Through subsequent years, when trifling and frivolous chat took the place of religion, oh! what time was lost. And when I consider how, through preventing grace, we were kept, when our feet had well nigh slipped, and how through a kind providence we have been conducted; how clearly does the whole demonstrate that God's ways are not as ours.

"You are now placed in a situation where you have opportunities of rendering essential service to the cause of Christ, and of bringing glory to God and respect to yourself. Such a worm as I, too, unfaithful as I have been, am called to that work for which I have

always had such a love—to spread the common Saviour's praise. Oh! what a mercy that God has thus blessed us. Are we not bound to live to his glory by obligations beyond all calculation! This weight of obligation I in some measure feel, and am determined to spend and be spent in the service of God. I feel increasingly happy in my work, and my determination is

"'To labour on at God's command,
And offer all my works to Him.'

But, my dear friend, recollecting past scenes, and the union that existed between us when perhaps the secret thought of each was known to the other, can I forbear making the enquiry, How goes on the work of religion in the soul? Is the heart panting after God? Is the lamp trimmed and burning bright? Have you a clear title to heaven? And do you keep yourself as free from the world as you should? Ah, my friend, often do I think of your connexions. Are they the best helpmates to the kingdom? I need not say to you, that such is the importance of religion that everything else ought to bend to it, and that consequently, in the choice of companions for leisure hours, we should consider, not merely their respectability or agreeable qualities, but whether they would be useful to us. I was much pleased with the last interview I had with you; but knowing as I do how very common it is for the views and feelings of a person in affliction to be quite altered when health returns, I feel it a duty I owe to an old friend to put you in mind of these things."

The following series of letters was addressed to a young friend in Devonshire, who had been connected with the established church and strongly imbued with Calvinistic opinions; but who, having heard Mr. Henley preach and frequently conversed with him, began to doubt the correctness of those opinions, and to manifest an inclination to join the Methodist society. In this case Mr. H. took a very deep interest, and the following letters are its evidence and results. Their length induced the editor to question the propriety of their insertion; but their intrinsic excellence is such, that he could not withhold from his readers the pleasure and profit to be derived from a perusal of them.

"Dunster, September 20, 1824.

"In my last I endeavoured to defend the Methodistical view of three of their controverted points. Much more might have been said on each. On the last, in particular, I wished to have enlarged; but time and paper forbade. Since I sent it, I have been reading the accompanying volume of Mr. Wesley's works; and the arguments appear to me to be so conclusive that I send it you, and recommend especial attention to those parts marked. There is another point on which you have some scruples, not noticed, or I believe but slightly, in this volume; but I am persuaded that the difference between us on this doctrine (I mean of perfection) is more in sound than in sense. The *sins* that you think we cannot be delivered from in this world, we call *infirmities*. You contend for holiness and sanctification; but we sometimes use the scriptural terms, 'sanctified wholly,' 'perfect love,' 'perfection.' If you think we really expect too much, examine the following scriptures:—Ezek. xxxvi., 25—29; Mat. v., 48; Eph. iii., 14—21; Heb. vi.; 1 John iii.; 1 Thes. v., 23, iv., 3; 2 Cor. vii., 1. I cannot now enter into the subject fully, but will only ask a few questions. Must not all sin be destroyed before we enter heaven? Is it the *blood of Christ*, or *death*, that *cleanseth from all sin* (not infirmities)? If God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," can there be any danger of asking too much? Do not the Scriptures quoted, with many others, command, exhort to, and promise this blessing? If so, are we right in measuring our expectations by the attainments of others? Should we not rather believe the Word of God than all the world beside? Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? if not, why are we straitened? Oh! when I think of the infinite merit of the death of Christ—the efficacy of his blood—the prevalence of his intercession—the fulness of his promises, I cannot but believe he is able to save to the *uttermost*. Oh! for that faith which

> ——'The promise sees,
> And looks to that alone,
> Laughs at impossibilities,
> And cries, It shall be done!'

Some have objected that God does not permit it, lest

it engender spiritual pride: but I would ask, which is the more calculated to produce pride, grace or sin? Surely that cannot produce pride which is *humility* itself. 'Perfection's height' is 'the depth of humble love.' I am persuaded you will join me in the words of Wesley,

"'Oh! let me gain perfection's height!
Oh! let me into *nothing* fall!
Be less than *nothing* in thy sight,
And feel that *Christ is all in all.*'

"With the scruples which you may have with respect to the discipline of the Methodists, particularly as it regards class meetings, I am not so fully acquainted as with those on doctrines. I hope I may have an opportunity of conversing with you on the subject at our anniversary, as I intend spending a few days at home in that week.—Your sincere christian friend,

"J. H."

"Dunster, October 9, 1824.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Thank you for your letter. The kindness it manifests—the piety it breathes—and the good sense it displays, yielded me great pleasure. I should have written before, but have been poorly from a violent cold, which I renewed in the bleak country where I had to preach on the Sabbath, although I was well wrapped up, even in the pulpit, about the face, so as to appear a curious figure.

"You ask, why did I propose such questions to draw forth controversial subjects? And here I must plainly answer, I did it from a sense of duty—of duty not so much to you as to myself; for, as you justly observe, these doctrinal points are not essential to salvation; and as it respects my regard for you as a christian, though I believe the doctrines to which you have been leaning are generally detrimental to religious experience, yet I have every reason to hope that your piety and sincerity will, *through grace*, prevent the injurious effects which have in too many instances resulted from such sentiments. You say, 'It is desirable to be decided;' and I add, it is *highly* desirable that christians very nearly united should be agreed on the *same* side of *these* questions. May God, who is able to direct our way, be our guide in every step! But it is high time to

proceed to make observations on the points in question. On the first you hesitate, and afterwards acknowledge that the scripture testifies in the affirmative, and even say you believe in the infinite merit of Christ as being sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole human race. This is all I ask in answer to that question. But the query with you is, whether He really intended to bestow the benefit of His death on all, and whether He has vouchsafed to every man a measure of His Spirit? This, properly speaking, belongs to the second question proposed, because it is by the Spirit only that any man can have the power to repent and believe, and God would not bestow it without intending it; consequently, the sum and substance of the matter is contained in this one question, Doth He vouchsafe to every man a measure of His Spirit? If I mistake not, what I have said is to the point. See the scriptures referred to. I have only need to answer with St. John, 'Christ was the true light which enlighteneth every man;' with St. James, 'He giveth to all men liberally;' with St. Peter, 'God is no respecter of persons.' The substance of your objection is, 'If every man has a measure of His Spirit, every man has some good,' which you think is unscriptural, because there is none good—no not one. But does it follow that because he has 'something good,' he is therefore actually good? Surely not. But I say more than this—that the natural man is not only *not* good, but that he has *no good thing*. But observe, when we speak of the natural man as thus altogether defiled by sin, void of every thing good, we consider him *independently* of those influences which *divine grace imparts;* for though we believe every man has, more or less, in some period of his life a measure of this Spirit given, putting it in his power to repent and believe, yet we do not believe that he brings with him into the world this 'something good,' or that any man has it naturally, but that it is a gracious act of God, who bestows it on every man for the sake of the merits of Christ's death; and thus it is that 'He is the Saviour of all men,' by purchasing for them and imparting to them this grace, which, if attended to, will end in final salvation: and thus it is that in Christ 'all the families of the earth are blessed;' and thus too, 'the free gift

came upon all men.' The universal bestowment of this gift, far from being opposed to the total depravity of the human heart, appears to be the only scheme upon which it can be true. So that, instead of admitting any force in your objections, I retort the argument; for I cannot see how a person believing God does not vouchsafe to every man a measure of His Spirit, can believe that every man comes into the world totally defiled by sin. Scripture, reason, and matter of fact, prove that all men have, at times, a something within them which convinces them of their guilt, and excites in them hopes, fears, and desires of a religious nature. Now, if all men have these feelings, more or less, but not the Spirit of God, they must have them naturally; for if they are not the production of the grace of God and the strivings of His Spirit, they must be the production of nature; consequently, if so, the human heart is not totally depraved. The same reasoning will apply to the freedom of the will; though, properly speaking, it is absurd to talk of will in any other sense than free; for when it ceases to be free, it ceases to be will at all. Yet I believe there is a sort of necessity on the will of man in his natural state, independent of divine grace, which makes it impossible in him to will anything but what is sinful: not that God has imposed this necessity, but sin has; that is, the propensities of our nature to sin are so strong, that it naturally and necessarily chooses the evil and refuses the good. But through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, man is delivered from this dire necessity, and the grace which Christ purchased and imparts to every man, makes him again a free agent. Life and death are again set before him, that he may choose either. We both agree that the power to repent and believe is the gift of God, and that He bestows it when and where He pleases; but I believe that He pleaseth to bestow it on *all*, because His pleasure and will are, of course, the same, and 'He will have all men to be saved.' He would not command men to do what He did not will them, and 'He commandeth all men everywhere to repent.' Surely you cannot have such ideas of God, as to think He can so far act the hypocrite and tyrant as to consign to eternal torments thousands of millions of immortal souls, for not doing what they never

had the power to do, and what He never designed they should do! But you seem to think that the possibility of their being lost, on whom God bestows His grace, or on whose heart the Spirit operates, involves a want of power in God, for you quote Isaiah xliii., 13, 'I will work, and who shall let it?' I answer to the question, in the sense in which the prophet proposed it,—None. God had resolved on the destruction of Babylon, the triumph of Cyrus, and the deliverance of the Jews by that means; but to the question in the sense you use it, I answer, Those to whom God said, 'I have called, but ye refused; I stretched out mine hand, but no man regarded:' 'Ye would not come to me that ye might have life:' 'Often would I have gathered you together, but ye would not:' and those stiff-necked—those who resist the Holy Ghost, and reject the counsel of God, let or hinder the purpose of God, as far as it regards themselves as individuals, in a way of mercy; but if they will not yield to the strivings of God's Spirit, and work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, while God worketh in them, He will one day work in wrath, and those who would not submit to His sceptre of grace shall bow to His iron rod of justice.

"I must hasten to the third point, on which you are much more firmly grounded, and in which your arguments are more plausible. The doctrine of final perseverance is generally the first thing embraced by those who go over from Methodism to Calvinism, and the last thing given up is *vice versa*. The more I think, the more I am confirmed in my belief that it is possible to fall from the grace of God. In my last I referred you to many passages to that effect. You must not expect me to write at large on the scriptures you have selected; I have not room. 1 Sam. ii., 9, is a promise of preservation in time of trouble; 1 Sam. xii., 22, read the context, v. 25, 'But if ye shall do wickedly, ye shall be consumed.' Psalm xxxiv., 22, and Prov. xxiv., 16, promise to the *good man* and to the *righteous*, that though *he fall* into *trouble* (not mischief) God will raise him up again. Isa. vii., 7, 8, 9, 10, is a beautiful and striking description of the mercy and faithfulness of God under the new gospel covenant, and appears to me to have a special reference to the preservation and

deliverance of the christian church in the midst of the dreadful persecutions through which it had to pass. By reading the chapter through, you will find that it is a prophecy of the establishment, the rise, progress, and final universality of the kingdom of Christ; and the verses to which you particularly allude appear to me especially intended to comfort the church under its days of darkness and trouble, with the assurance of stability; and the verses following go on to foretel that glorious day when all shall be brought to God. Thus it is a covenant with the church generally; and though as members of the church of Christ we have an individual interest in it, and have a right to draw comfort from it in times of trial and temptation, yet it does not imply that every individual member is infallible, or may not cease to be one, for the apostles, speaking to the members of the church interested in the same covenant, say, 'Thou standest by faith;' and Jesus himself threatened the churches of Ephesus and Sardis with 'removing the candlestick out of its place unless they repented;' Rev. ii. iii. chapters. Jer. xxxi., 37, is a promise that the seed of Israel, notwithstanding their being cast off, scattered over the face of the earth, persecuted, and trodden under foot of all nations, as they have been and yet are, shall not be utterly destroyed, but again brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles; and though the following chapter, in verses 39 and 40, on which you so much rest your cause, had certainly a partial fulfilment in the return of Israel from captivity, and this it primarily alluded to; but that it has not its complete fulfilment even yet, is evident from the expression on which you lay so much stress; and you cannot but see that the time is not yet come when neither they nor their children shall depart from God, because at this time they are aliens from the commonwealth and strangers to the covenant of promise. But I do expect, according to prophecy, that the time shall arrive when they shall be gathered out of all countries, &c., (see v. 37,) and when all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest, while as a nation and a people they shall never more depart. I believe also that such a hallowed and powerful influence shall be given to all classes of society, that sin shall be extirpated, and there

shall be no more apostacy. But you say, 'Though it is a promise made to a peculiar people, yet it is left for our instruction and comfort.' True, it instructs us to pity the Jews and to pray for their conversion; and it comforts us with the assurance of a day when 'righteousness shall cover the earth.' But I cannot take comfort from it in the sense in which you understand it, for it proves too much:—it proves, either that God has not fulfilled his promise, or that very few are interested in it, that is, as you receive it—a promise made to every child of God that they *never shall depart* from Him. It proves that David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Thomas, Judas, Ananias and Sapphira, Demas and the Galatians, most of the seven churches, most of those christians I have ever known, and myself especially, were never the children of God. I do not dispute that he puts his fear in the hearts of his children, and that this fear will, when followed, prevent their departure from him; but, while we have evidences that some, notwithstanding all the care and influence of Christ over them, have in unguarded moments fallen into sin, I think that it does not infallibly belong to every child of God. Such a thought and view of the subject appears to me, consequently, to be calculated to make sad those whom God hath not made sad; and make those think, who reflect on their departures, that they never did enjoy any real religion.

"If the text is to be taken in a personal sense, it proves the possibility of a state of perfection and freedom from power to sin above what we term christian perfection. I would not say there is not such a state, but I would not contend for it, because I see no ground from scripture to expect it. I see reason enough to expect such a state of attainment as to preclude the necessity of sinning, but not the possibility. So you see I shall make it appear that you are a perfectionist in a much more absolute sense than I am; but this I know you will object to, in which case you must give up the text, for it is plain that either every child of God as a believer is infallible, or else every believer is not *in your sense* interested in this promise, or is not faithful. St. John, v., 24, is a promise to him that *believeth* in the present tense—not hath once believed;

and the words 'shall not come,' it is said, should be translated into the same tense, 'cometh not' into condemnation. It does not imply that we may not make shipwreck of faith: xii., 1, 'Having loved His own that were in the world' (mark those words, '*in the world*')—His disciples, 'He loved them unto the end'—*loved* in the *past tense*, consequently it is an end *already past*—that is plainly, the *end of His stay in the world*. And of them there was an exception, as it appears from the next passage you quote (xvii., 12). The persons spoken of there were evidently the disciples only; because Christ enlarges his prayer for future believers in verse 26; and the possibility of even the disciples falling is proved by the case of Judas, who was one of those given to Christ with the rest, but forfeited by his own wickedness. See also the declarations of the Saviour, chap. xv., especially verse 6. Rom. viii., 38, 39, does not say that *sin* shall not separate us from the love of Christ. Ephes. i., 13, it is true, speaks of being sealed unto the day of redemption; but in chap. iv., 30, all are cautioned against *grieving* 'the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.' 1 Thes. v., 23, 24, is part of the prayer of the apostle for their preservation and future glorification, which implies a possibility of its not taking place; secondly, an encouragement from a consideration of the faithfulness of God, that nothing shall be wanting on His part, 'for if we believe not, He abideth faithful;' and that does not imply that He will preserve us notwithstanding our unbelief; oh no! 'If we deny Him, He will also deny us.' (2 Tim. ii., 13.) 2 Tim. iv., 18, the apostle expresses his confidence in divine grace, or rather in divine protection from the evil intended by the enemy, mentioned in verse 17; yet, that he did imagine it possible for him to fall, and even to lose his soul, is proved by what he says in 1 Cor. ix., 27, 'I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.'

"I have examined all the passages to which you refer, with their contexts, and find nothing against the possibility of falling from grace.

"For illustration of your favourite text you advert to

the case of those who fell in the wilderness, at which I am surprised, as it makes completely against you. You own they forfeited the promised possession through unbelief, though it was equally promised to them as to Joshua and Caleb at first. What is the natural inference, but that which the apostle draws in Heb. iv., 1—11; 'Let us therefore fear,' &c.; 'Labour lest any man fail,' &c.

"I find there is one reference I had omitted, Peter i., 5; but it explains itself, and in fact gives the sum and substance of my views of the doctrine. We are only kept by the power of God *through faith;* only let us 'hold fast the beginning of our confidence' firm unto the end, and our final perseverance is then sure.

'Only let us persevere,
'Till we see our Lord appear;
Never from the rock remove,
Saved by faith which works by love.'

"Many passages I must omit for want of time. Forgive me if I appear dogmatical and positive: perhaps I am not plain. I write hastily, and have not time to read my letter over to correct it; but when I see you, I can explain.

"I feel thankful to God for my christian friends at Torquay. I hope I shall benefit by Mr. G.'s seasonable advice. Let us not forget, in the midst of this controversy, to aspire after the mind that was in Jesus. Oh! 'to be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication to make our requests known unto God.' This scripture has very much lessened the anxiety of your sincere friend, "J. H."

Dunster, December 18, 1824.

"My dear Friend,—I waited for yours with some anxiety. I admire your candour, whilst I regret its cause. The piety your letter breathes, and the prudence manifested, are very pleasing. I could not wish you to be less conscientious. I hope divine grace will ever keep me from taking or recommending to another any step towards its accomplishment, which will not bear reflection; and I bless God I feel no disposition to do so. Such an act would incur his displeasure, and embitter, by remorse of conscience, future

life. But what are the obstacles to your uniting yourself to the Methodist society? We have gone through the doctrines, and you appear generally satisfied. To that of final perseverance you still cling; but I think you will soon be convinced, if you produce all your strong reasons, and submit them to the standard of truth, with a mind open to conviction. Hitherto I have, you must confess, allowed you fair play; I have only gone on the defensive. You have not attempted to invalidate passages of scripture on falling from grace, which, I thought, bore me out. Your principal reasons have been, that it honours God and that you derive comfort from it. I found no difficulty in my feeble way in reconciling all the texts you quoted with my views. My explanation of Jer. xxxii. you approve of, allowing that it belongs to the millennium day; and yet because many (not all—surely you cannot think all) passages of scripture have a double meaning, therefore you still hold it fast as on your side. But recollect, such passages should not be considered as conclusive for any doctrine, though they may sometimes prove a source of information and comfort to the christian. When a text is adduced in favour of any doctrine, it should always be taken in connexion with the context, and limited to its proper application; otherwise we shall be led into many errors.

"The subterfuge to which you resort—that of excusing yourself for want of ability to reply—I cannot admit. You say it requires an abler pen than yours to defend the doctrine; I grant it, for it requires the art of 'making the worse appear the better reason.' This word, you add, gives you such comfort, 'I will never leave thee,' &c., and reflects so much honour on the Deity, that it confirms your faith. Now I think I discover the excellency of the passage, and derive comfort from it, without seeing the subject as you do. I receive it as a promise of the presence of God, assuring me that if ever a separation takes place it must originate with myself, and not with Him; consequently, I must not be high-minded but fear, taking heed lest there be in me any evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; knowing that if I forsake Him, He will forsake me, yea, will cast me off for ever. (2 Chron.

xv., 2; 1 Chron. xxviii., 9.) The assurance on God's part is great, and with the view I have, I exclaim, rejoicing with the Psalmist, 'How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust in thee.' So would I, and be not afraid. Now it appears to me that your view, instead of reflecting more honour on the Deity, actually impugns the holiness and justice of His nature, the veracity of His word, yea, the goodness which is essential to His nature, and, in short, charges Him with being insincere and unkind in his dealings. This, you will say, is assertion without proof; be it so—it is as good as your assertion on the other side; and I think I can show you reasons for what I say, and shall be more particular in endeavouring to do this, because I do believe that you, with some others, are much afraid that the Methodists are not sufficiently careful to give God all the honour. They have often been charged with this in reference to justification; but I presume you are better informed than to think so; still you are jealous with a holy jealousy of the honour of God in the opinion of the possibility of falling from grace. I commend your feeling, but contend that the danger is rather on the other side—that the doctrine of final perseverance reflects on the attributes of God and the veracity of His word. It reflects on His holiness and justice, for it is not—it cannot be denied that some have fallen into great and gross wickedness after they have believed. Now your view teaches that they are still His children;—He delights still in them and approves of them. I ask, then, what becomes of God's holiness, which cannot but hate sin with a perfect hatred; and of His justice, which is inflexible and bound to punish sin? But it is said by some, He hates the sin but loves and approves the sinner. Does God then distinguish between the individual and his conduct? So thought not John: 'Little children,' he says, 'let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous; he that committeth sin is of the devil.' God is said to judge of men by *their works*. But, it is objected, God hates sin, yet He can be just under the gospel covenant by viewing his people in Christ; and whatever may their conduct be, He imputes not that to them but approves of them in

Christ. Now there is some truth in this, for 'God can be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus,' though he were ungodly and whatever his conduct had been. This I bless God for, as otherwise no flesh living could have been justified in His sight; but, whatever lengths some may go in this doctrine, I think you will admit that God does not—cannot in justice, according to His word, absolve from the guilt and remit the punishment of sin, but through faith in the atonement. —See John iii., 18; Rom. iii., 25, 26. That this faith works by love and purifies the heart, and is evidenced by good works. Consequently, in the case of those who fall into gross sin, this faith is wanting; they have 'forsaken the fountain of living waters,' and have 'made shipwreck of faith;' and thus divine justice cannot view them as under the gospel covenant in Christ. God cannot but look on them as guilty and under condemnation; though, with your view, he still owns and approves of them! I ask then, where is divine justice and holiness! I hesitate not to say that if He approve and delight in those who are wallowing in sin, He can be neither just nor holy; and yet, I tremble while I write it, such is the doctrine of final perseverance! But it reflects on God's goodness; for, if He 'can be just and yet the justifier' of those who continue in sin, and consequently do not believe (with the heart, or in the gospel sense,) there can be no just reason why He should not approve and justify all men; and the doctrine which teaches us that His justice does not hinder the justification of one person going on in sin, reflects on His goodness, that He does not so justify all men, whatever may be their conduct, for what would be justice in one case would be equally so in all others. I had almost said, more so in the case of impenitent sinners than in that of fallen believers, because the sin of the latter is aggravated and their guilt increased in proportion to the measure of light and grace which they have abused, their last state being worse than their first. If God is pleased with persons when they grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom they were sealed, what become of holiness, justice, and mercy? He may pity, but does not approve of them. If so, where is the veracity of His word, and the immutability of His na-

ture? Hath He not said by Ezekiel, 'If the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, his former righteousness shall no longer be remembered?' and if you can, I shall thank you to tell me how you reconcile the language of that prophet with your favourite doctrine. But you resolve still to take refuge in Jer. xxxii. It appears to me that if the prophecy be a promise, God would by irresistible grace prevent all, once his people, from departing from Him ever after. The history of the church in all ages, and daily observation, prove Jeremiah to be a false prophet, or God not so good as his word. Take for instance David: you will admit he was in the favour of God before he sinned in the matter of Uriah. I need say nothing on the extreme wickedness of his conduct; but if those who are once in God's favour are always so, David was at the time he was guilty of murder, &c. Does not this reflect upon God? Where were his goodness, holiness, and faithfulness, that He did not prevent David's fall; and could there be justice and holiness to approve of such wickedness? Horrible thought! I tremble while I write it. You will, no doubt, say I exaggerate; but it appears to me to be the necessary consequence following such a doctrine. It charges God, too, with insincerity and unkindness in His word; for if it be impossible for a person once justified to perish, why is the bible so full of cautions, warnings, and threatenings? Are they cautions against dangers that have no existence? Where is the sincerity of threatenings that it is impossible should ever fall on their heads? Is it kind to frighten them with imaginary dangers? Surely that cannot be true, which so reflects on the attributes of the Deity—that tends to make Jehovah no longer an object possessing those perfections which demand and deserve worship, but makes Him appear a being that approves of sin!

"Whatever difficulty we find in interpreting some passages of scripture, we should beware of receiving such misrepresentations of Deity; and ever consider, that no conclusion of ours on one text can be correct that falsifies and contradicts others. But you are unwilling to yield your point, because you derive so much comfort. You would, I think, receive even more if you

embraced the Methodist sense of such passages. It does not appear to me that comfort derived from some passages which preclude the possibility of attending to the direction in other parts, can be scriptural. I ask, how can a person, taking the promises alluded to as an assurance of final perseverance and glorification, attend to the cautions and warnings so numerous? The fact is, the promises of God are so sure, and He so faithful, that we need not fear at all on His part; but we are so changeable, so prone to start aside, that he 'that thinketh he standeth' (*sure*, in the original) 'should take heed lest he fall.' But my opinion, I say again, is that our view is far more consolatory than yours. You draw your comfort from the assurance of final perseverance; but many who once had this conviction, as they thought, are now wallowing in sin, and some in the midst of all talk about 'the sure mercies of God!' You will say they were deceived: it was not from God: 'they went out from us because they were not of us.' Thus you admit the danger of mistake, and bringing forth for a time fruits not genuine. To say nothing of the absurdity of this, ought not he who says so of others to tremble for himself: and when he falls into sin again, is it not a proof that he was deceived? Surely he must feel it: and whatever comfort he may pretend to derive from the doctrine, it is such as will not bear investigation without leading to the conclusion that he had been mistaken; that he was not a child of grace, for, if the promise is made infallibly to all the children of God, he cannot be one now, who instead of persevering is drawing back. Consequently on your scheme no one can be assured until he get to heaven; that is, if it be possible for those who once think themselves so, and evidence the works of grace, to fall again into sin, and this you admit. Forgive every error: I have had numerous interruptions —have written at different times and places, as opportunity permitted; and have not leisure to read it over. That it may be unintelligible, I fear. May we still be guided by God, is the prayer of yours, "J. H."

"March 7, 1825.

"Have you a love, my dear friend, for the cause of

God? Aid that cause by joining yourself with those who are united to Christ. Do you desire growth in grace? Use the means of grace. Is it not presumption to expect the end without the means? Have you 'believed with your heart unto righteousness?' Then, with the mouth make confession to the world and to the church, by not forsaking the 'assembling together.' You must not act rashly, but you have had time well to weigh the step, and if your conscience convince you, it is your duty to join the society. This will bear you above the opinions of others—this conviction of rectitude. If there be such a cross connected with the duty, as that of forfeiting the good opinion of others, let it be taken up, and come. What will you gain by delay? With respect to a diary, I would recommend you to continue so useful an employment, or rather a journal, as every day may not furnish variety; though I think the more frequently the better, as there is no standing still in religion. Writing may promote a growth in grace by leading to constant examination of the heart and conduct; and if there were no other advantage, this would abundantly compensate. Another benefit is, the help it affords in the retrospection of past life. How much of experimental knowledge is there lost by a treacherous memory; but the looking over a journal would refresh the 'bye-gone'—lead to self-knowledge, humility, gratitude, and confidence. But my opinion is chiefly theoretic. The *very little* I have recently done in that way has certainly proved beneficial to me; but as you have long tried it, you must be the better judge. I merely give you my opinion as you asked. But again I say, join yourself to the people of God. My advice is after mature deliberation. Do so by all means. I think you have only to convince your family that you believe it to be for your happiness, and they will consent. Your jealousy of being influenced by friends where religion is concerned is right; and I should have a mean opinion of that person who allowed himself to act contrary to the dictates of conscience.

"I bless God I find increasing delight in my work, and I think I never was more affected with the importance of the ministerial office, nor ever felt more liberty in the discharge of it than on the last Sabbath. Pray for your affectionate friend, "J. H."

"April 24, 1825.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I feared from your silence that my letter had grieved you, and was pleased to find myself mistaken. I trust God will sanctify this affliction to the good of your family. At such seasons how insufficient are all earthly friends to afford consolation, particularly in death's dreary moment, if we have not a hope beyond the grave; and how unfit is such a time for obtaining that hope! You now feel more gratefully the blessing of a kind and affectionate mother. Though I do not mention each by name in my letters, I often do in my prayers, and I hope eventually you will see an answer to yours in their conversion. I highly respect them, and often have thought they seemed to want nothing but religion to render them ornaments to christianity as they now are in the society in which they move, and be as 'acceptable to God' as they are already 'well pleasing to man.' But this is a sort of digression unusual with me: I must come *to the point*. 'Aye, to the point,' you are ready to say; 'the drift of all is, to make a Methodist of me.' This, my friend, is what you seem to intimate in your last; and though you certainly drop the hint in a very polite way, yet I cannot help thinking it is a sort of indirect way of adding, 'less to the point would be more acceptable.' Well: but 'it is good to be zealously affected in a good thing;' and it is the conviction that rests with me of the goodness of the cause, that leads me so to persevere as to leave no stone unturned to accomplish the object.

"I feel a calm composure of soul, and a steady reliance upon the promises of God, and, *through divine grace*, a desire that my will may be 'swallowed up' in His. For this, as well as in every other respect, with these views and feelings, I still think it my duty to prosecute the object; for notwithstanding the slowness with which it seems to come to a conclusion, yet I hope I see in the distance a prospect of a closing in.

"You say you have attended to my advice in my last, and you think you *do not mistake scruples for conscience*. You see many reasons why you should join yourself to society; but you are resolved that, before you take such a step, you must not only see the thing

as reasonable, but conscience must dictate to you its propriety. You are often the subject of impressions on your mind to this effect; but because it is possible that these impressions may have flowed from a wrong source, they are not satisfactory to you. This is the simple state of the case. This, I think, you will find to form a sort of circle, from which it will be impossible to get out without breaking the ring. The last proposition will not bear examining; for, admitting them to be good, you ought not to join society unless conscience dictate; it will follow from the last, that you never can be satisfied in your mind in the way you require. You depend too much on impression, and speak of the dictates of conscience: conscience never dictated anything, where a reason could not be assigned. Your observation on the feelings in times of devotion in closet exercises are excellent; and from what I can gather, at such seasons you are in favour of the point in question—of joining yourself with us. I do not wonder at the undefinable state of your mind at these times, occasionally; but I do wonder that you allow merely such feelings and suspicions to have more weight with you than general impressions produced and backed by scripture and reason. I write just as the subject passes through my mind, and as I should speak could I see you. But I must leave you, as I have to go into the country. I am sorry to hear your enjoyments in divine things are less lively. Look to my text of last night, 'Let not your heart be troubled,' &c. I felt much quickened and comforted, whilst showing, first, the evidences by which Christ is set forth to our faith in the gospel; and secondly, that the exercise of this faith is well calculated to dissipate all the anxious fears, &c., of life.

"Yesterday I preached four times—twice in the open air; and within a fortnight, nine times out of doors, six of which were in new places.—Yours,

"J. H."

"May 21, 1825.

"I have only just returned from the District Meeting, where I had to stand up before all the preachers, the thought of which almost made me quake with fear;

however, I felt much as usual after getting a little into my subject. God graciously warmed my heart, and I had considerable liberty from Rom. x., 10.

"Your letter arrived a day or two ago; but in consequence of my absence, I did not so soon receive it.

"Forgive me if I seemed to bear too hard upon you in the warmth of argument. I did not intend it, nor so to grieve you. Throw the mantle of christian charity over it. Let me entreat you to continue to attend the Methodist ministry, and mingle with them as you have done. I shall have no fear of consequences. How do you get on with Fletcher? And what are your thoughts? The volumes I left with you are sometimes rather severe; but you must consider the circumstances under which they were written. You complain of sorrow and heaviness: perhaps God is trying your faith; sensible comfort is sometimes withdrawn for this purpose. But hold fast Christ. He is all! Let me recommend to you Wesley's hymn, page 259. As I have to preach four times to-morrow, I say, 'Adieu!' I have partly promised to remain another year in this circuit, for which I had an invitation. Your sincere christian friend, "J. H."

"Dunster, June 22, 1825.

"It gave me pleasure, my dear friend, to find my last was satisfactory, and I am glad to hear you say you have been making every effort to become decided; and though every obstacle is not removed, I hope you will not relax in your efforts. I pray God to direct us in every step, and to frustrate all our movements if not for our mutual holiness, happiness, and usefulness, and for his glory.

"But let me entreat you, make one great effort, once for all. You have found a gap, you say, and what if it be not quite plain to the ground? spring over it: if we wait until every obstacle be removed before we proceed to duty, duties never will be discharged. Obstacles there will always be in the way, so long as we are in an enemy's country, and are the subjects of infirmities and liable to errors. But these must be overcome. You say, if you are fully convinced, nothing shall prevent you from walking in the path of duty. I will tell you

how I proceeded with a poor woman a few days ago in this circuit. She had attended our ministry and received good to her soul, but did not feel it her duty to meet with us. I said, 'You wish to get to heaven, don't you?' 'Yes, certainly.' 'And you know that in order to get there, you must use the means if you would obtain the end.' 'O yes, Sir; I know I must pray and watch, or else I cannot believe and love God.' 'And you feel it your duty, then, to get all the help you can in the way to heaven.' 'Yes,' 'Well, and do you not think a class meeting, where you might hear pious people tell their experience, their trials, supports, temptations, victories, and enjoyments, &c., of the love of God, would be a great help to you; where you can speak of your own feelings, and views, and get advice, and encouragement, and caution, from such pious men as Mr. Symons or Mr. Hill, our leaders, on your particular state; and where two or three afterwards pray one for another?' 'Don't you think,' I said, 'that this is a means of grace well calculated to strengthen and help you in the way to heaven?' 'Yes, certainly, I should think so.' 'Well, then, if you admit that, you admit that it is your duty to meet in class.'

"In this plain way I succeeded in conversing with this plain woman, and she promised to join immediately.

"This is the method of argument I would adopt with you. You know, however superior your attainments in religion, first, that you are dependent every moment on God for grace and strength to stand and withstand; secondly, you acknowledge the connexion of the means with the end—that if God hath appointed means of grace, you have no right to expect the one without the use of the other; thirdly, that christian communion is a means of grace of divine appointment, sanctioned by the practice of primitive christians, and admirably calculated to comfort, strengthen, edify, and quicken the soul, so prone to cleave unto the dust; fourthly, that class meetings among the Wesleyans approach nearest to the primitive practice of any meetings in any church or society of christians to which you have access. I ask then, whether it doth not follow, fifthly, that it is a duty you owe, first, to God who hath appointed the means, whose providence hath placed

these within your reach, and whose grace hath qualified you to attend and participate in them; secondly, to the church of Christ, whom you will have an opportunity of edifying and assisting by the relation of your own experience, and uniting your prayers with theirs; thirdly, to yourself. You may thus be comforted, &c. Is it not a debt of gratitude as well as an act of obedience to God, an act of benevolence to fellow-christians, and a measure of prudence to yourself, to join such a society, and attend such a means of grace?

"All that is required is 'a desire to flee from the wrath to come,' evidenced by forsaking sin and seeking the holiness of heart and life necessary to salvation from Christ only, in the use of his appointments.

"But my watch tells me it is time to close. I am increasingly happy in my work, and have no doubt of realizing an answer to my prayers, either in possession or in grace and strength to submit to the will of God. I trust I am making some progress in holiness. May he bless you abundantly. Affectionately yours,

"J. H."

"August 9, 1825.

"I am sorry to hear of your trials. I fear, my dear friend, they have produced that clouded state of mind of which you complain; but let them operate as they have already done—lead you to self-examination, watchfulness, and prayer; and you will eventually see that, though you have called it a clouded state, yet that it is not literally a distance from God. He is present with you, teaching self-knowledge, and leading you, perhaps, 'through the fire and water into a wealthy place.'

"I have lately been preaching from Isaiah ii., 5, 'Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord;' and have had my mind much blest whilst endeavouring to exhibit the privileges to christians, and to exhort them to a realization of all these spiritual discoveries, heavenly attainments, and divine enjoyments, so graciously purchased and so freely offered.

"I was at the Conference last week, where I had an opportunity of seeing my old friend Mr. Morgan, who has just returned from Africa, and of witnessing the so-

lemn and interesting ceremony of receiving the preachers into full connection. The impressive charge delivered and the extraordinary fervency and power with which the Rev. Jabez Bunting prayed for the divine sanction on the ordinance, and the spirit of prayer that seemed to pervade the whole congregation, I think I shall never forget; it surpassed every thing I ever witnessed, and was indeed a high day—to me it was one of the days of the Son of Man.

"I have lately had my mind much tried, but this shall turn to the glory of God I must conclude, as I have to walk seven miles to my appointment, and it is time to go. I remain, yours, "J. H."

"October, 1825.

"I was pleased, my dear friend, with yours, and rejoice that you have peace through believing. When 'God justifieth, who is he that condemneth?' and 'if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.' Yes, it is this which makes prayer an exercise in which the soul delights; for

'With confidence we now draw nigh,
And boldly Abba! Father! cry.'

"Thus it is that privilege and duty are connected.

"The way to be happy in the enjoyment of grace, is to frequent the throne of grace. The way to 'rejoice evermore' is 'to pray without ceasing;' and the way to be able to 'pray without ceasing' is by exercising that faith in a crucified Redeemer and exalted Mediator, through which alone we can have access to the Father and receive the unction of the Spirit. O, to be one with Christ, what a privilege! What a dignity! Worms of the earth, heirs of corruption and misery, raised to be heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ! O the depths, the heights, the lengths, the breadths of love unspeakable!

'The bliss of those that fully dwell,
Fully in Christ believe.'

"My work has lately so much increased upon me, that it has been with difficulty I have been able to get my sermons ready as I have wanted them.

"The opening new places, forming new classes, &c.,

which, through the mercy of God, we have been enabled to do, require particular attention; and glory to Him! we have some pleasing intimations of a revival of religion. I too have been more than usually engaged in visiting the villages, and going from house to house.

"Such exercises are exceedingly profitable; you, I doubt not, find them so, as you relieve the distressed, and thus alleviate the sorrows of poverty.

"At such times do not forget to remind them of their natural poverty in a *moral* point of view; exhorting them to seek for *true* riches, and exhibiting the '*grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who, though *he was rich*, yet for our sakes became *poor*.'

"I believe that a holy and exemplary life is likely to be more influential in the conversion of sinners by recommending religion, than mere personal exertion. Yet, I think, the both must be united to make us very useful."

"December, 1825.

"This then, my dear friend, closes a correspondence which, though it has proved a source of trial, yet has been sanctified to each. May we ever have fellowship with God! It is our privilege not only to have a gracious visit now and then, but to have *uninterrupted communion*—to *dwell with God*, that is, to dwell in love, and this is the 'heaven begun below.'

"We may yet be *baptized into one Spirit;* and however we may be situated, and whatever difference of time and place, and circumstances shall be our lot; that we may continue 'fast bound' in 'one spirit to the Lord,' until we meet and mingle in the climes of bliss, shall be the prayer of your friend."

It is unnecessary to refer to the circumstances which led to the termination of this correspondence. Suffice it to say, that the friends, though mutually consenting to discontinue it, retained their wonted esteem and regard for each other, and that the object of Mr. H.'s affectionate care was led to embrace and avow the doctrines which he so admirably recommended; to become united to the Methodist society; and still maintains the life of faith, and the character of a devoted and exemplary christian.

CHAP. III.

"I WILL ALSO CLOTHE HER PRIESTS WITH SALVATION, AND HER SAINTS SHALL SHOUT ALOUD FOR JOY."—PSALM CXXXII. 16.

Revival in the Taunton Circuit—Rev. John Smith—Christian Perfection—Journal—Out-of-door Preaching—Mr. H. athirst for the perfect love of God—Sermons to Sailors—Indications of prosperity—Discouragement—Tenderness in reproving—The Conference—At home—Desires for holiness—Obtains entire sanctification—Letter—Journal—Spiritual blessedness—Tokens of Revival—Watchnight—Religious experience—The Swearer—Minehead—Anecdote. 1825—6.

THE blessed work of divine grace was at this time prospering in a very remarkable manner in the adjoining circuit of Taunton. In that town and in Bridgwater, as well as the country places generally, the extraordinary zeal and abundant labours of the Rev. John Smith were honoured by signal tokens of the divine approval. The societies were stirred up to fresh diligence; many believers pressed into the enjoyment of the perfect love of God; and numbers experienced deep conviction of sin, and were led to seek religion. To the subject of christian perfection—its nature, necessity, and attainableness, the powerful and spirit-stirring sermons of Mr. S. were instrumental in directing general attention; and many happily obtained the heavenly blessing. A general revival of religion was the delightful result, and its influence extended into all the circuits around.

The good news speedily reached the Dunster circuit, and Mr. HENLEY was peculiarly affected by it. He had hitherto 'walked in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost,' while his private excellence and his ministerial fidelity were acknowledged by all who knew him. But he saw that there was yet a deeper work of grace possible and necessary. The re-

mains of inward depravity, of which he makes mention in the preceding extracts from his journal, he felt to be contrary to the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him. He saw that if he loved God with all his heart, they would exist no longer; and that love he believed God could enkindle and maintain. Hence to this great subject his thoughts, reading, and conversation, were directed. He opened a correspondence with his excellent brother minister, Mr. Smith, which was of great service to him; and began in full earnest to seek this inestimable blessing.

At the same time a strong desire for a revival of religion began to be expressed throughout the circuit; the best means of promoting it were seriously discussed at the Quarterly Meeting; and suitable measures were adopted. To these subjects the following extracts from his journal will be found to refer.

"APRIL 12, 1825.—At our last Quarterly Meeting I proposed a plan which would allow me one week in a month to visit the destitute villages, and endeavour to introduce preaching. It was decided on. In commencing this plan I this week went to Monksilver, accompanied by Mr. H., one of our stewards. Several attempts had been made previously to get a footing there, but in vain. All this I had been told before I went; consequently my expectations were not very sanguine. However, I felt it my duty to make a trial. After calling from house to house, and giving the people notice, I preached under an apple tree, from Acts x., 42, 43:—'And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.' Had a pretty good and attentive congregation. I told the people I hoped to be there this day month again, and offered to visit them regularly, and procure preaching, if they would open a house. One woman offered hers, and I pray it may prove a means of good to them. May the Lord, who 'openeth and no man shutteth,'

> 'Open the door to preach the word,
> The great effectual door.'

"Wednesday, went to Sandford; called on the villagers; borrowed a chair, and had above seventy

persons, who expressed themselves grateful, and hoped I should repeat my visit. An aged man and woman seemed particularly thankful, and said repeatedly, 'God bless you, Sir.'

"Thursday, to Cutcombe; stood at the foot of the cross at the bottom of the village, and proclaimed the Lamb of God. Not less than seventy attended, who were generally well behaved. To night I go to B——. 'If thou go not with me,' O Lord, 'carry me not up thither.'

"16.—I bless God for having enabled me to fulfil my proposed plan, and that I have had a congregation every night, and liberty to speak to them. My mind is perplexed to-night about subjects for to-morrow.

"18.—Preached in the street at Timberscombe. A goodly company attended, but was annoyed by a drunken man who came out of a public house with a clubstick, resolving, he said, to knock me down; he appeared full of rage, and as he was coming towards me I felt rather intimidated, but in an instant I was convinced God would not allow me to be injured, and he seemed suddenly turned from his purpose, and went back to the house. Now and then he came out again, but with no stick.

"21.—Have been led to ask what is the reason I do not enjoy full sanctification? Surely I am very culpable. I have not sought it with that earnestness I should, and though I have felt concerned about it at times, yet I have not persevered in the search. What is the reason I have not sought it with more fervent zeal? I fear it is one for which I am highly criminal in the sight of God. I was not conscious until now, but I do fear this is the cause—a thought that if I enjoyed it, more would be expected from me by God; and as it would be a duty binding upon me to profess it, that I should necessarily be pointed at as a mark, and every defect would be to my disadvantage and the injury of the cause of God. This has never been embodied in words before or properly examined. I see it to be a worthless objection. It may have had some influence in deterring me from the blessing, though I was unconscious of it. Lord, pardon this sin and shew me what other causes there may be. I have been criminally negligent in secret prayer. But am I not

now looking at it, as though I must obtain it by my prayers? Has there not been too much of self in my thoughts on the subject? This may be the case. Surely the hindrance must be in me, and though I can do nothing to deserve it, yet God hath said, 'For all these things will I be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.' Lord, create in me earnest prayer which thou wilt answer, and the 'mighty faith' which shall realize the blessing. But, O merciful God! though I have been criminally neglectful, this need not hinder the blessing now. Shew me now the way. I believe, O Jesus, thou art able to save to the uttermost —believe Thy blood doth cleanse from all sin. Spirit of faith, create in me the desire that shall never let me rest until I rest from sin.

"25.—At Lynch, out of doors; weather unfavourable, but I had promised. Felt so wearied on my return that I begged a glass of water of a poor cottager; they were very kind, and begged me to sit down and rest; this I could not do, but I knelt with them and implored the blessing of God to rest upon them and their family. The man seemed to be a sincere seeker of the 'kingdom of heaven.'

"MAY 2.—Rode across the country, and preached in the open air. I had much liberty, but became very hoarse. I find I must endeavour to govern my voice in out-door preaching.

"12.—At Sanford, very stormy, but many were waiting; told them of the 'new birth.' We were sheltered from the rain by a large tree.

"13.—Preached at Crocombe to as many as were disposed to hear. Some tried to annoy me, but without effect. The wind blew so cold that several who were inclined to hear could not bear it. May God give his blessing.

"15.—To the sailors on the Quay, from 'Master, carest thou not that we perish?' Missionary services at Watchet.

"18.—At five o'clock, before the District Meeting, from Rom. x., 10. Entered the pulpit with fear and trembling, but God graciously assisted me, and I rose above my fears.

"22.—At five in the morning, on the Quay, at

Watchet—'The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee.'"

Watchet is a small town and port on the Bristol Channel. As one of the principal places in the Circuit, much of Mr. HENLEY'S time was spent there and in no place did he labour with greater assiduity and zeal. He directed peculiar attention to that class of persons who, though from the hazardous nature of their employment and their necessary disadvantages they seem to challenge the christian's sympathy, are yet most generally neglected—the sailors. Mr. H. seldom visited the town without bestowing some time upon them. He went on board the different vessels, and distributed tracts or spoke to any who would listen to him, and never missed an opportuny of accosting and conversing with those he met on shore. It will appear from his journal that he frequently preached on the Quay, addressing himself particularly to this class of persons. And it was often delightful to witness the gratitude which the poor fellows manifested, and the powerful effect which the word produced on their minds. Mr. HENLEY was well adapted for this work. Frank and open in his manners and affectionate in his spirit, he never failed to meet a hearty reception and a thankful attention to his message. After preaching, some of the men frequently followed him to the chapel, and not a few became regular attendants upon public worship, and afforded gratifying evidence that they had not heard in vain.

"JUNE 10.—Prayer Meeting at five; a noble company; exhorted from Psalm v., 3. Bless the Lord for His goodness! I find my faith and love increasing; but I want to have the testimony that I love God with all my heart and Him only. What is it, O my soul, that keeps thee from receiving this blessing? I feel a growing confidence in the promises of God, and an ardent desire to realize sanctification. I can say, 'Jesus is mine and I am His,' and I do resolve to give myself unreservedly to Him. I want uninterrupted communion with the triune God.

"12.—At Washford, at ten o'clock, from Rom. viii., 27. Met the class for tickets.—Preached at half-past one at Withycombe; at four at Minehead; both times

out of doors.—At half-past six at Dunster: preached and gave tickets. When I began my labour I felt low and shrinking from the duties of the day; but God graciously visited and quickened me while giving tickets after morning service, so that I have found it a happy day. I think I never before spent one at once so laboriously, so happily, and, as I trust, so profitably.

"JULY 1.—Quarterly Fast. At the Prayer Meeting at five o'clock, my soul was much humbled and refreshed. On reviewing the past quarter I have abundant cause to praise God. I never preached with so much liberty. O yes! He has been gracious to me in this respect. I have seldom been engaged in public but my own soul has been blessed, and, as far as I have opportunity of judging of the state of the people, they have expressed themselves as profited. But can it be that such a worm as I can spread the Saviour's name?

'What am I, O thou gracious God?'

Hadst thou been strict to visit my sins, thou mightest have withdrawn thy Spirit; but, instead of this, thou hast given an increasing measure. I have had more fervency and faith in my approaches to God; much enlargement of soul for a full salvation from sin, and for the salvation of the souls of the people; have been enabled to attend to the resolution with which I set out at the commencement of the quarter, and have visited the surrounding villages, preached in ten new places, in five of which we have houses opened. O for gratitude and humility! And now I desire to covenant afresh with God: if thou, O God, wilt take me for thy servant and son, I will take thee for my God and Father! Sanctify me wholly, body, soul, and spirit; then shall I love thee with all my heart. Set me at perfect liberty. Strengthen me, and I will 'labour on at thy command.'

"2.—Visited an old man in his ninety-fifth year. Asked to be allowed to preach in his house; he consented, but an aged woman who takes care of him objected, fearful, I suppose, of having a little extra trouble; so I talked to them seriously, and proposed prayer. The woman was much affected; and, on our rising, she immediately proposed that I should preach

in the evening, and said she was sorry she had refused. I preached on the Quay at Watchet this morning to a large and attentive congregation. My preaching so much in the open air has been so seriously condemned by some of our own people, that I have reason to think it may lead to my removal from the circuit at Conference. I am comforted with the consideration that it is approved of by the more pious, and by my Superintendent. One of the greatest opposers came to me today, and used all his efforts to prevent me. I asked him if he thought he should be able to give a good account of his opposition before God; and if he thought so with regard to himself, whether he would answer for me at the bar: he was staggered. At the close of the service, a young woman came to me with tears in her eyes. She had found peace. Glory to God!

"4.—My mind painfully exercised. I had to reprove a member at class; he was so offended that he left the room. I followed him to the door, and urged him to stay during prayer. I felt grieved for his soul and the cause of God. My mind was depressed deeply. I examined whether I had acted wrong; but I had strong confidence in God, and felt satisfied. After the meeting, and in opposition to the advice of other members of the class, I went to his house and found him quite softened down, and he acknowledged his fault.

"10.—Met the children at Monksilver. About thirty, and a few grown persons, present. I distributed about thirty of Wesley's catechisms. Hope this will lead to a Sunday School. Had a long conversation with a pious woman on christian perfection. Her account is very clear. Since I left her I feel increasing expectation of realizing it myself. O! to be a vessel of honour fit for the Master's use."

Though a large proportion of the society in the Circuit cordially approved of and rejoiced in Mr. HENLEY'S extraordinary labours, there were some who regarded them as injudicious and improper; particularly his preaching so frequently out of doors, and at the various fairs and places of amusement in the neighbourhood; and who expressed their disapproval in sufficiently strong terms. He felt this very sensibly, and for awhile it appeared quite to weigh down his spirit.

These persons, however, lived to alter their opinion respecting it; though for some time their opposition was a source of severe exercise to his mind. It is to this he refers in the following extracts:—

"My spirits sadly depressed. This seems to be a great hindrance to my private devotions. Quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word!

"28.—Passing through fiery trials. I hope even these shall turn to the glory of God. Sanctify them, I beseech thee, to the good of my soul, and overrule them for the welfare of Thy church. I think I could submit to any thing that I was convinced would be for thy glory. Help me to say, 'Thy will be done!'

"29.—My mind anxious. Why am I thus? Oh how difficult to rejoice when our names are cast out as evil, though it be for the sake of Christ! Lord! undertake for me. Do with me as seemeth thee good.

"AUGUST 2.—Bristol. Attended Conference. This has been a happy day. May the savour of it ever remain. Mr. Bunting concluded with prayer in a spirit and manner, and with a power that surpassed everything I ever witnessed.

"9.—O for christian perfection! When shall I realize it? When, gracious Lord, when shall it be? Should I not be more useful, more happy, more alive? Is not this the great hindrance to my usefulness, that I am not more holy? Lord make me a vessel of honour, fit for the Master's use. I have been reading 'Wesley's Plain Account.' My soul is on the stretch for the blessing.

"27.—Torquay. My heart beats with joy and gratitude again to visit my father's house Called on many old and dear friends. Was sorry to find —— had no family altar; urged them to ask God's forgiveness and begin at once. Lord, pardon the families who 'call not upon thy name!' Talked closely with ——, and prayed him to set out afresh for heaven.

"SEPTEMBER 7.—Left Torquay: a pleasant, and I hope, profitable visit. Reached Withypool just in time to preach. Felt considerable pleasure in resuming my regular appointments again.

"20.—On reaching Watchet, no chapel doors open. Preaching not expected. Opened the doors and rung

the bell myself; prayed, and exhorted about ten persons to 'walk in the light of the Lord.'

"27.—My mind much drawn out for full conformity to the mind which was in Christ. Was deeply humbled on reading part of Mr. Fletcher's experience. I fear in seeking sanctification I carry my views too much into futurity. This blessing is to be enjoyed moment by moment, so to speak, by a continued act of faith. Shew me, O Lord, where the hindrance is. What keeps me from deliverance from all sin? O let it be mine. I dare not doubt thy word;

'Be it according to thy word,
This moment let it be.'

Amen and amen!

"28.—Preached on the subject of christian perfection. I bless God for enabling me to speak without embarrassment on a state of experience I have not myself enjoyed. Felt whilst speaking that it was not far from me. My faith was strengthened; my hopes brightened; my love increased.

"29.—Prayer meeting at five, at the Parsonage. Was afraid to abstain entirely from food; took a little bread and a cup of tea.

"OCTOBER 21.—Dined at ——. Not having a favourable opportunity to introduce religious conversation, and not feeling free to force it, I read to them after dinner some of the most interesting extracts from Mr. Wesley's journal in 'Benson's Apology.' All present appeared much interested. My natural diffidence with strangers is a great barrier in the way of my becoming useful in the discharge of this duty; but I have been lately stirred up to fresh effort.

"21.—Breakfasted at Paper Mills. Felt very poorly in the evening; my old complaint, sick head ache, affected me so much when I began the service, that I could not see to find my hymns; yet, through mercy, I preached and felt little inconvenience; indeed, I had more liberty and energy than all the day before.

"NOVEMBER 4.—Met the society; addressed them on the importance of holiness—its advantages to themselves, the world, the church. A time of refreshing. Much sick headache this week, and frequently wet through in walking over the hills.

"9.—My soul on full stretch for sanctification. Preached from 'But we all with open face,' &c. Felt faith strengthen. Why do I not possess?

"17.—Spoke to the people about 'the beauty of holiness.' My soul on the eve of possession; and with all the joy of anticipation we sang,

'O! glorious hope of perfect love.'

"18.—This morning awoke with ardent desires for the blessing. Sanctification was the subject of my last thoughts before I slept, and, indeed, for hours I could not sleep for the anxiety of desire. On rising I felt it impressed on my mind that I must pray—that God was about to bless. My soul, with all the vehemence of restless resignation, cried out for the blessing. It was then suggested that I should not obtain the answer until I had read 'Pipe's Dialogues' (a book recommended to me). Faith said, 'God is *now* able;' and I was so full of hope, that I was determined if I could find a promise I would lay hold on it. At first, none occurred; but, as I continued praying, I was led to plead the miracle of the leper. I said, Let me be cleansed; Lord, say to me, as to him, 'Be thou clean.' Instantly I was persuaded God had done the work. It was not an overwhelming rapturous joy, but a calm and joy and peace spread through my soul, such as I never felt before. But soon after I felt doubts arising from questioning myself, whether it were really full sanctification. I knew it was a great blessing, and a state of experience far above anything I had previously known; but I thought I would not call it full salvation. In the morning prayer, at the family altar, I felt overwhelmed with gratitude for the mercy of God, and every doubt was removed. I related what I had received.

'Who will join my song of praise.'

"19.—The Lord has confirmed my faith by powerfully applying this scripture, 'Now ye are clean.' Bless the Lord, O my soul. Glory to Him, I am fully convinced He is about to revive His work. Had a gracious service. Was much encouraged through hearing of some who expressed themselves as growing in grace."

On this delightful subject he writes the following letter to a friend, which more minutely details the

particulars of the glorious work of grace of which he was the subject.

After alluding to Peter Bohler's advice to Mr. Wesley, when he was seeking justifying faith, 'Preach faith until you have it, and then preach it because you have it,' he proceeds:—

"This I resolved should be my plan with respect to sanctification. I consequently continued to read all I could get at on the subject, and preached on it frequently, especially to the societies, and urged it in the classes; and glory to God! now I preach it because I do enjoy it. On reading a letter in an old Magazine, I was much struck with this expression—'Believing views are transforming views,' and was led by it to meditate on 2 Cor. iii., 18; my soul was much blessed, and in the evening I preached from it with unusual liberty; my faith was strengthened, and my hopes were brightened. After preaching, and at the class, a young person present related her experience, and bore her testimony that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' The members seemed athirst for this full salvation. I imagined I saw the blessing at a little distance, so that I could distinctly apprehend its nature, and admire its loveliness; but I could not grasp it—I did not possess it. This was on Wednesday the 16th. The day following I preached at Williton, from 2 Cor. xiii., 9. This was a second sermon on that text, and having described the nature of the Apostle's wish, and shewed its reasonableness from scripture precepts, promises, prayers, and examples, in the former part, my object now was to bring this doctrine to the test of experience, and then to shew the desirableness of the wish, by mentioning some of the advantages connected with its realization; and whilst enlarging on this subject, my views of it were such as I cannot easily describe. Never before, I believe, was my whole soul so lost in my subject. I seemed to have such a representation of the beauty of holiness, that my attention was riveted, my affections were engaged, my desires were more than ever ardent, and my determination was *never* to rest satisfied without that *full salvation from all sin* which I saw to be *my privilege*. My hopes were full that God would 'cut short His work,' and make an end

of sin. With these hopes I sang with joyful anticipation,

'O glorious hope of perfect love,
It lifts me up to things above,
It bears on eagles' wings.'

On retiring, my soul was so drawn out to God after this blessing, that I could get but little sleep; my language was,

'Nor *can* I, Lord, nor *will* I rest,
Till I am saved indeed.'

I awoke early in the morning of the 18th, with my whole thought fully occupied on the subject; and though I was so full of anxiety and *restless desire*, yet they were *not painful feelings*; there was a blessedness connected with them which I cannot explain. It was now impressed on my mind that I must immediately get on my knees—that God was about to display his sanctifying power. It was very early: I arose, and had much freedom and power to wrestle in prayer. Various were the suggestions of the enemy, that I must do this or that; but faith resisted all. My hopes were so full, and I felt so satisfied that as it was the work of God alone He could then perform it, that I resolved to lay hold on the first promise that presented itself. I pleaded the miracle of the cleansed leper, and said, 'If thou wilt, thou canst *make me clean*.' Instantly I believed God *had done the work*, and I felt a calm, a joy, a peace spread through my soul, such as I never felt before and such as I cannot convey an idea of. It was not an overwhelming rapturous joy; but a sweet peace and holy love that is *unspeakable*. I felt *I loved God with all my heart*. I saw *myself as nothing*, and *Christ* was *all in all*. It was not long before I was tempted to doubt, and to question whether this was really full sanctification which I enjoyed. That it was a state of experience far exceeding anything I had ever received before, I could not disbelieve; but I thought I would not profess to have realized perfect love. However, whilst joining in family prayer, my soul was so overwhelmed with gratitude for what God had done, that I found I must speak of it. In the evening, in private, my soul was much enlarged, and God graciously confirmed my

confidence by a powerful application of these words, 'Now ye are clean through the words which I have spoken unto you.' Since then I have been powerfully assailed; but I can say, in a certain sense, the enemy cometh, but findeth nothing in me. In the midst of all his assaults and other trials, which I have had to pass through, I have felt *constant peace within*, and *uninterrupted union with God*. But I find nothing in this state to justify any *relaxation of watchfulness* or *prayer;* just the contrary; it, indeed, enables me 'to pray always with all prayer, and watch thereunto with all perseverance.' And I see it to be both my duty and privilege to be still pressing forward; for I do not count myself to have attained a point beyond which *I cannot go, or from which I cannot fall;* but I see more than ever the necessity of an increase of faith, love, and humility —indeed, *of every christian grace*, and my prayer is, that

'I may deeper sink, and higher rise,
Till He transplant me to the skies.'

Two local preachers have found this great blessing, and many of our members testify that they are hungering and thirsting after full salvation, while others are enquiring the way to Zion. This is what we have been praying for. It is the Lord's work, and is marvellous in our eyes. These we believe to be the droppings which presage a coming shower of divine influence. O join us in your prayers."

"NOVEMBER 22.—I have been so happy the last three nights, I could scarcely sleep. My confidence and joy increase. I cannot describe my feelings. Preached from 'The glorious gospel of the blessed God.' Met the class, and told them of what God had done for my soul—not without considerable hesitation at first, lest I should lose it, or not walk worthy of such a profession; but I was enabled to testify of it, and was blessed in doing so.

"DECEMBER 4.—Sabbath—sacrament: O! what a feast to my soul. Was at first much tempted. But I recollected that Christ was in all points tempted, yet without sin. Was unspeakably happy, and my soul was filled with love.

"5.—Dined at the Parsonage. After dinner, had

some profitable conversation and prayer. Having intended to set off for——to try to get a house to preach in, the rain was so heavy that I half yielded to my friends' intreaties to give it up, but proposing to sing a hymn, I opened the book on

'Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go.'

On concluding, I resolved to weather the storm, and succeeded to my delight in procuring a house which a poor man promised at great risk. I then gave them a word of encouragement, and returned to the Parsonage, where I slept.

"7.—The Spirit of hearing increases; seventeen persons expressed themselves as desirous to join us. I trust they will become steady members. May the Lord continue His work in Minehead. Have been comforted and strengthened in reading 'Pipe on Sanctification.' Yesterday, I took some tracts and visited the greater part of Washford.

"15.—At Williton. Preached on christian perfection. Gave tickets to the class—a blessed opportunity. The members seemed very thankful to God on my account, that since I last preached to them on the same subject I had realized the blessing.

"Had my mind much tried this morning, on hearing some absent persons spoken evil of. Whatever were the faults of the parties, it grieves me to the heart to hear detraction. I calmly and faithfully spoke my mind, but for this I was myself implicated. This text supported me, 'I gave myself unto prayer.'

"17.—Rode to Crocombe. Prayed that God would dispose the heart of some one to open their house for preaching. Was refused again and again.. Went from house to house, but determined not to give up the point; and, through mercy, I hope the attempt was not in vain, or the prayer unanswered. A very convenient one is promised, on condition that the landlord give his consent. May God, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, make the landlord like-minded with the tenant in this respect. At Roadwater our little class is not only increasing in number, but I believe in grace, simplicity, humility, and love; and generally we are adding to our members. Blessed be God!

"Christmas-day. Arose this morning, elated with grateful joy at the commemoration of so great an event. The lovefeast was the best I ever witnessed.

"31.—This ought to be a season of review. The year closes, and with it all its privileges and mercies, dangers and duties. Lord, pardon my sins of omission and commission. I have reason to be humble and thankful. Notwithstanding my unfaithfulness, I bless God that through grace I have made some progress in the divine life, and God has given me seals to my ministry.

"MORNING OF NEW YEAR, 1826.—Preached from 'At midnight there was a cry made,' &c. A solemn time: finished just before twelve. Whilst on our knees in silent mental prayer, a sacred stillness seemed to pervade the whole meeting and influence all present. When the silence was broken by the striking of the clock which ushered in the new year, I gave out

'Come, let us anew,' &c.

"JANUARY 6, 1826.—I began this year in Watchet chapel, and by solemnly and publicly renewing my covenant with God. Was particularly pleased to see some of the new members at the early prayer meeting. I preached from 'Come let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant.' Felt deeply impressed with the willingness of God to receive sinners into covenant with Himself. I realized by faith the triune God as present—the Father, Son, and Spirit waiting, presenting as it were the terms of the covenant written and already sealed with the blood of Christ, inviting all to subscribe their names to the deed, and the Spirit ready to impress the additional seal on the heart. Mr. Shepherd preached a most delightful and encouraging sermon from 'The Lord hath been mindful of us, He will bless us.' I felt overcome with gratitude and humility on a review of the mercies of God towards us as a circuit, and for the great work that had been wrought in my own soul. To-night, I have enjoyed the prayer meeting at Monksilver, and had an overwhelming sense of God's presence and love whilst singing—

'And can it be that I should gain,' &c.

"8.—Set off for Dulverton, over the hills. My kind

superintendent thought it imprudent, as the weather was so rough; but, as they had been given to expect me, I thought it my duty to persevere, and through mercy arrived safely, and I believe good was done. May it appear after many days.

"16.—For the last few days my health has been impaired, and my spirits low. Preached at Roadwater; and as I could not well be alone, I went to an outhouse and poured out my soul to God. All was 'calm, and joy, and peace.' Gave three notes of admission on forming a new class. Hope they bid fair for the kingdom. One poor woman at the preaching, who has been a great persecutor, was so deeply wrought on that she resolved to give her heart to God.

"25.—Have 'peace with God through Christ.' Am not so full of joy. I believe I do not love God less, but every day feel myself laid under additional obligation to love Him more. O my God, my Saviour, 'thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love Thee;' and I will love and rejoice in Thee! All glory to God! O for that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory! I possess a measure of it.

'My earth thou waterest from on high,
But make it all a pool;
Spring up, O well, I ever cry,
Spring up within my soul.'

"27.—An old impenitent sinner, and another proverbial for wickedness, were at preaching to-night. Felt my mind greatly drawn out to God for them, especially when singing this hymn:—

'Art thou not able to convert?
Art thou not willing too?'

At the lovefeast, eighteen persons spoke; some of whom have lately received pardon.

"FEBRUARY 6.—My mind much depressed lately. Have not had that fulness of joy which I possessed some time ago, though I have been very happy. To-night I have been harassed with a fear that I had not been faithful during the day in preaching pointedly to the hearts of the people; but, on examination, I feel no condemnation. They must be the suggestions of the enemy. Read over the tract, and solemn-

ly renewed my covenant with God. Felt blessed and quickened whilst so engaged.

"10.—On my way to the Parsonage, called on several friends at Washford. Had a short prayer meeting at Fanny's. After dinner visited the workhouse. This morning was devoted to canvassing for signatures to the petition against slavery. I feel deeply for these poor oppressed fellow-creatures. O God, favour the attempts made to ameliorate their condition, and hasten the time when civil and religious emancipation shall be universally effected, and all enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"16.—My soul drawn out after God for a deeper baptism of the Spirit. In some measure I have realized it. At the class Mr. S. bore testimony that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' My heart was overwhelmed with gratitude. Gave four notes of admission. My soul sinks deeper unto God. Glory to Him!

"18.—Rose at four o'clock to join our little family circle at prayer. Had a delightful season. Brother S. is struggling to be free. Rode to C——, but can get no place. I fear I shall have to wipe off the dust from my feet against that village.

"19.—Was so happy in the morning service at Washford, that I could hardly refrain from telling the whole congregation. Met the class, and was grateful to God to hear five present bear testimony 'that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Each one has realized it within ten days. Feel humbled that God should use such a worm. He is reviving His work! Met with a poor man this morning, swearing sadly. I reproved him kindly, and told him of his sin; he was displeased and surprised; I talked long to him; at first he was angry, but afterwards softened down. I told him that what I had said was out of love to his soul. I held out my hand: 'Come, shake hands, my friend.' 'No,' was his reply. I begged him not to become hardened in sin. 'I am going to preach to-night,' I added; 'will you join us? Do try, that is a good man.' He said, 'Well, perhaps I will.'

"23.—God is reviving His work amongst us. Many are seeking Him. Saw Mr.—— to-day; thirteen

years ago he gave me my first ticket. My mind naturally reverted to those days. Oh, how thankful ought I to be that whilst stronger souls their faith forsook, I have been kept!

"MARCH 10.—We are refused to occupy any longer the house in which we have preached in Minehead. When I first heard this, I felt so hurt that I scarcely knew what to do. The Sunday evening service in that house appeared so likely to be useful, and our hopes for Minehead were so bright, that for the moment it seemed as though all were blasted. But I soon began to consider it is God's cause, and He is above men, devils, and sin. Who can tell? This may lead to the erection of a chapel! I do believe God will hear prayer in behalf of this town, and the enemy and his emissaries shall be had in derision, and the Mighty One will laugh them to scorn."

The town of Minehead, which, it will appear from the above, was an object of peculiar interest with Mr. HENLEY, has for many years presented in a spiritual point of view a melancholy picture. When the nonconformist ministers were ejected from their livings in 1662, by the wicked and tyrannical measures of Charles and his parliament, it is said that a very pious and devoted man was expelled from Minehead, who had faithfully laboured there for many years, though amid much opposition and with little success. On taking his leave of the scene of his almost fruitless exertions, he preached in the middle of the street; and in the course of his sermon, as if suddenly fired with prophetic inspiration, he lifted up his voice and exclaimed with thrilling emphasis—"*Oh Minehead! Minehead! I see a cloud hanging over thee, which it will take ages to disperse!*" The lapse of years has verified this awful prediction. A blight appears from that time to have rested upon the ministry within the church, and the labours of dissenters have been forbidden by the proprietors of the borough; the result of which is that the unhappy town has suffered a long continued famine; "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord." Many times Mr. H. visited this place, and preached out of doors or in a cottage or other house to which access could be obtained; and

since that period the attempt has been repeatedly renewed, but with little success. The cloud is not yet removed. "Return, O Lord God! Look down from heaven, we beseech thee, and behold and visit this vine!"

"MARCH 12.—At seven o'clock met Mr. H.'s class. Gave tickets to six new members, who bid fair to be steady and pious. Three notes of admission. At night met the society after preaching: urged on them the necessity of realizing daily some advancement in the divine life, and of retaining and carrying with them into the world the savour of the means of grace; particularly pressing them to self-examination, whether they had profited; if so, to guard and keep what they had received, and evidence it by living nearer to God the coming week than ever they had done. I believe there was a good feeling. Felt much liberty and power."

CHAP. IV.

"BUT NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME; NEITHER COUNT I MY LIFE DEAR UNTO MYSELF, SO THAT I MIGHT FINISH MY COURSE WITH JOY, AND THE MINISTRY WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD JESUS, TO TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD."—ACTS XX., 24.

New Chapels erected—Birth-day—Letter—the Gospel call—Duty of obedience—Letter—State of the Circuit—Journal—Covenant—Lovefeast—Missionary Meeting at Bridgewater—Rev. John Smith—Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer—Mr. H. inclined to offer himself for the Missionary work—Letter—on Reading—Foreknowledge of God—Faith—Journey to London—Rev. Edward Irving—Rev. John Anderson—Farm-house—the Club—the Wake—Delightful Intelligence from Torquay—Offers to become a Missionary—Farewell to Billbrook—Leaves the Circuit—Torquay—Labours there—Style of Preaching—Study—Devotion. 1826.

A GRATIFYING evidence of the success of the labours of Mr. HENLEY and of his affectionate and judicious colleague, was furnished in the increase of the congregations in every part of the circuit. In some places, the numbers who crowded to hear the word of God were so great, that the existing chapels were found entirely inadequate to their accommodation, and the erection of new and more commodious places of worship was imperatively required. To accomplish this object, the societies generally evinced a degree of zeal and liberality, worthy of the highest praise; a new chapel was built at Watchet and another at Washford; and arrangements for the erection or enlargement of others were in progress. In promoting these designs, Mr. HENLEY'S assistance was extremely valuable. In soliciting contributions, selecting trustees, and the many other services which the influence of a minister's position enables him best of all to discharge, he was indefatigably active; and both to him and to Mr. Shepherd the societies generally acknowledged their great obli-

gation for the judicious and able assistance which they rendered on these occasions. It was their satisfaction also to witness the places which they had been instrumental in erecting, attended by numerous and devout congregations, and hallowed by the presence and power of the Most High.

"MARCH 26.—Heard Mr. Crowther at the opening of the new chapel at Washford. Felt very much tempted to wandering thoughts, and great difficulty to hear with profit; but after struggling hard, had my soul again drawn out sweetly and powerfully after God.

'Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.'

"28.—Carhampton. Few people present. Had a prayer meeting. Spoke a little on being crucified and living with Christ. The anniversary of my birth-day. I am now twenty-six years old. About one half of this time I have been a member of the Wesleyan society;—a very unworthy one. On looking over the past year, I see I have still abundant cause to make my complaints, and have to humble myself before God for my many shortcomings. Oh! I have been following God at too great a distance. I have not husbanded my time as I ought. I almost tremble to think how many times I have been in company, and allowed the time to pass away in unprofitable conversation. How much more useful I might have been, had I been more zealous and faithful in this respect. I am pained and humbled too, when I think of the little time spent in private devotion; and sometimes, when my soul has not been disposed for closet exercises, instead of persevering to wrestle and pray until I have obtained a quickening, (knowing, as I do, that whenever I have importuned and wrestled God has blessed and fired my soul,) I have too often given over the exercise. Oh! how much more holy I might have been had I always persevered. Another source of humiliation is that of irregularity in rising; that though I have frequently risen early in the morning, yet not so habitually as I should have done, consequently have lost much time in sleep. Again, in reading and study I have not been so regular and constant

as I ought. I have, perhaps, had too many books and subjects in hand to gain the greatest advantage. But alas! what am I doing? when shall I have done enumerating my deficiencies? Instances multiply upon me. Oh! I must give up, and pray to God to enable me to be more faithful. I trust, through grace I will, in each of these particulars mentioned especially. I see there is a 'more excellent way.' But shall I leave off without erecting my Ebenezer to God? Surely not. It would be base ingratitude in me not to remember the gracious dealings of my Father with my own soul, during the past year. Glory, glory to God! notwithstanding my many deficiencies, it has been the best year in my life. I have lived nearer to God than ever before;—have been brought to realize a degree of 'perfect love;'—have had much union with God;—and have seen more fruit of my labours in the ministry than in all my life before. And now I will praise His glorious name, and give myself more fully to the Lord. I have had trials, many and painful; duties arduous and important; but 'my God hath supplied all my need,' and shall supply. I trust in His promises. At present my confidence is unshaken, and I pray God to work His sovereign will in me and by me. Amen."

It was not Mr. HENLEY's least praise that he devoted the utmost pains to the acquirement of correct and clear theological views. Hence he was peculiarly fitted to convince and reclaim those who had been led astray. The mingled fidelity and affection with which he did this, will appear from the following letter:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Hearing lately that you have been drinking in strange notions, I have long wished to write you. And before I proceed, allow me to observe that my object is not controversy for the sake of party, for I think I never felt so much indisposed for such correspondence as now. Yet I think it my duty to write to you on the sentiments you have imbibed, from a fear or rather conviction, that they will prove inimical to piety. And my conviction is the stronger as I am told you are acting on the principle of *waiting for the call*, instead of coming immediately to the Saviour. Now permit me to ask you, what call do you

expect different to what you have already had, and that repeatedly? Have you not heard that gospel, which is the voice of God, calling you to repentance and faith? Be assured every gospel sermon is a call from God. 'He that heareth you heareth me,' saith the Saviour. You say, perhaps, this is only a general call, not a particular. But it is the one as well as the other; for not only is the gospel commanded to be preached to 'every nation,' but God by the gospel 'commandeth all men everywhere to repent.' That command you have repeatedly heard sounded in your ears, so that you as an individual have been called. 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.' You may attempt to take refuge under that scripture, 'No man can come to me except the Father draw him.' But do not forget likewise that Jesus Christ said, 'If I be lifted up I will *draw all men* unto me.' And I now appeal to your own conscience as a proof. Tell me, have you never felt the influences of the Spirit? What else has enlightened your mind in any measure to give you to see yourself a sinner, and in need of a Saviour? Was it, think you, a work of your own heart or of the devil? Oh no: 'Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights.' Whence come those good impressions and desires of which you have been the subject? Are they the production of the natural mind? Oh no; 'In our flesh there dwelleth no good thing.' This was God 'working in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.' See, then, that you 'quench not the Spirit,' but yield to these influences, and 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' 'Oh!' you say, 'you set me to work; what can I do?' The Apostle shall answer, (for observe, it is the Apostle who says 'work,') 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me; for though we are not sufficient of ourselves,' &c. 'Yes,' say you, 'but this grace is not given to every one: all cannot say as the Apostle did.' This may be partly, but is not altogether true. All have not the same degree of grace with the Apostle: he giveth one talent to one, to another two, to another five; but every man hath his talent—his measure of grace, whilst in a state of probation; and whilst the highest degree is given so as not to destroy the free agency of man or make his sal-

vation so sure as not to require constant co-operation by watchfulness; (and this is proved by the Apostle, who found it necessary to 'keep under his body lest he should become a castaway;') on the other hand, the lowest degree is saving in its nature and design, and will prove sufficient if attended to; for 'He giveth more grace.' Use grace and have grace; neglect it and have it taken away! Now then, as a lover of your soul—as a 'worker together with God,' 'I beseech you also that you receive not the grace of God in vain.' And I charge you, at the peril of your soul, to come to the Saviour immediately, *as you are*. Talk not about waiting for any other call. I have heard of persons, and, if I mistake not, there were some in your parish, who sat under the gospel many years, waiting for the call, but died without it. Oh! my dear friend, if you wish to 'make your calling and election sure' (you are to *make it sure*,) begin immediately to cry unto the Lord. At this very moment Christ is inviting you. Oh! come just as you are—guilty, to be pardoned—filthy, to be cleansed. Beware of these false notions of unconditional election. Oh! settle not down. Be assured it is only 'he that believeth shall be saved;' 'he that believeth not is condemned already.' And though the grace of faith is the gift of God, the act of faith must be your own. It will not do to trust you are elected unless you are regenerated and born again. It is vain to talk of being in Christ without being new creatures; or of Christ being ours unless we have his Spirit; ('For if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his;') or of being predestinated by God to eternal life, unless we are conformed to the image of His Son; or of being righteous in Christ, unless we are the subjects of a righteous nature wrought in the soul, so that we become created anew in Christ Jesus after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. Now this is the high and holy calling of the gospel to which we are all called; for 'God is no respecter of persons,' and the gospel knows no restrictions.

"The way to 'make our calling and election sure is by seeking earnestly the inward witness of the Spirit that we are the children of God, and the corroborating evidence of a holy life. This delightful state of ex-

perience is your privilege; and that you may be stirred up to seek after it and to realize it, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate cousin, "JOHN."

The discouragements under which Mr. HENLEY was called to labour were not of long continuance. Seldom does the work of God prosper, but some adversary is found to oppose it, or obstacles arise to impede its progress. Such was the case in this instance; but God graciously interposed, and the things which happened were made rather to tend to the furtherance of the gospel. To this he gratefully refers in the following letter:—

"Williton, July 7th, 1826.

"MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,—Although you are a letter in my debt, I avail myself of this opportunity, and, indeed, if I do not write and remind you that you owe me one, it will go out of date. But I must, I suppose, consider your son occupies your attention; and, by the bye, he is a namesake of mine, so that in attending to him JOHN HENLEY is not forgotten. Well, it shall be my prayer that he may be a much better man than his uncle. May all his parents' virtues live in him without their failings! I was much pleased to hear your prospects at Torquay were brightening, and that the work is spreading. When a concern for religion is increasing among young people, it is a good sign.

"Do, my brother, use means to introduce amongst the people a habit of conversing on religious subjects. To you this is no task. You never were the subject of that natural backwardness I was. I have often wished for your talent in this respect. But I bless God that I have been enabled in a great measure to overcome this natural feeling; and I see the way to keep the soul alive to God is to make every meeting resemble as much as possible a class meeting. We have seen the good effects of it lately here. Glory be to God, we have had a little reviving. The Lord is prospering His work. Several remarkable conversions have taken place, in some of which the power of divine grace has particularly appeared in the weakness and unworthiness of the instrument employed. We have added since Conference nearly thirty members, and have above twenty on trial.

Several of our members, who had gone on for years without a clear sense of pardon, have lately been stirred up afresh to seek, and have obtained the witness of the Spirit; and most of them have received a deeper baptism of the Spirit, and four or five have realized full sanctification. Oh! praise the Lord with us and for us. We expect yet 'greater things than these;' we hope it is but like the droppings which presage a copious shower, or the first fruits of a rich and plenteous harvest. The adversary of souls has been busy in attempting to oppose the work, but the Lord is omnipotent, and we believe the enemy will be disappointed: his attempts have been to sow discord amongst the members. Some very unpleasant circumstances have taken place, which have called for the exercise of severe discipline. Attempts, too, have been made to injure me in the opinion of my Superintendent, when they could not prejudice me against him; but through mercy this has not succeeded, but, on the contrary, has been of considerable service to me; so that some who were against me are now my warmest friends. I believe I can now call them all *my friends*. We hope all the unpleasantness is now subsiding, and there is reason to believe the result will be for the glory of God.

"What is remarkable, and has served to encourage us in the midst of the worst of circumstances, is, that we have seen good doing in the very society concerned. We have added four new members, and there are four more on trial in that place. Two or three of them have found liberty; and I think I can see the hand of a wise and gracious God in thus balancing the one with the other. I have had a share in the trials, and a rich share too. I have had peculiar discouragements and encouragements; but I have had a share too in the rich and spiritual blessings which have been showered upon us. Glory be to God, my own soul has been watered from on high, and that not only by gracious visitations and quickenings at certain seasons, but God has been pleased to give me a degree of establishing grace, so that in the midst of all that has transpired, I have had constant union with God and uninterrupted peace within. For nearly nine weeks I have enjoyed a measure of that perfect love which casteth out fear,

and am able to bear my testimony that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. I trust I have both the witness of God's Spirit and my own to this truth. Not that I have anything to boast of, save in the cross of Jesus Christ. And I can now glory in this more than ever, for by it I am crucified unto the world and the world unto me.

"Do you, my dear brother and sister, enjoy freedom from all sin? if not, what is the reason? You know it to be your privilege. Oh! rest not short of it. Pray for it. Believe for it. Live for it. Expect it, and expect it not at some distant period, but *immediately*. It is the work of God, and not of time as we are sometimesapt to think. All that is wanting is simple faith in God's promises, and not merely for their future fulfilment, but for the present moment. The faith which the gospel requires is a momentary faith; and though in some cases it respects futurity, yet when spoken of or required as the condition of salvation from sin, whether its guilt or power, it is a *present faith realizing a present salvation*. I shall hope to hear from you soon, and I hope to hear good news of the progress of the work of God. Yours in sincere affection,

"J. H."

"MARCH 31.—Quarterly Fast. I desire to covenant afresh with God. Felt my soul drawn out in prayer. At a meeting with the family this morning early, and again at nine, particularly for an outpouring of the Spirit on the societies and congregations. Visited Mrs. G.——, whose resignation under severe affliction, and confidence when on the very verge of eternity, is encouraging. Felt strong faith in prayer for her. Heard Mr. Shepherd this evening, and was profited. On the review of the day, I have been much stirred up, and hope to lay myself out more fully to save souls by every possible means. I trust I shall not be satisfied with doing merely what would be considered by men, even the most pious, my duty; but that I will through grace, do all I possibly can for God. And in order to this, I feel I must live nearer to Him.

"APRIL 2.—A lovefeast: very well attended; time fully occupied, and many more were waiting to speak

but could not; and when I found we could not possibly continue the meeting any longer, I gave them an opportunity of bearing a testimony for God, by calling on all who then felt confident of a personal interest in Christ to stand up. I then said a few words to them on the gratiude they owed, and the consistency of conduct by which it should be manifested, and pressed them to seek a more complete salvation. I then turned to those who remained sitting, and urged them to seek the pardon of their sins: they seemed to be much affected, and two or three were in deep distress.

"7.—Prayer Meeting at five o'clock at Williton. Set off at eleven for Bridgewater to attend a Missionary Meeting. On arriving, almost the first thing I heard was that I must be a platform speaker. I refused, but it seemed refusal was useless: however, I could not bring my mind to make a speech, so I just told the people how I felt about it, and merely seconded the motion. Mr. Squance excited much interest and worked on the sympathies of all by his statement of what he had witnessed among the heathen; and his accounts of the success of missions elicited gratitude.

"8.—Spent a good part of this morning in company with Rev. John Smith. How have I longed to see and converse with him. We have made an exchange, and for the sake of the people I am anxious he should take my place, but I shrink from the duty of filling his pulpit. I fear the people will not be profited. One very pious but bluntly honest woman, told me I must do as well as Mr. S., or they would not have me again. I replied, 'I hope you will pray for me,' and I said it feelingly. I have not felt so much of the Saturday's nervousness for a long time past, and I most anxiously wished myself at home. I have been proposed by the stewards to travel in that circuit next year; but it is inconvenient to the improvement of a young man, and that to me is of so much importance that I conceive it better not to go. I believe the Lord will direct me.

"9—Attended morning Prayer Meeting, and preached three times. After the evening service we had a Lovefeast. On the whole it has been a good day. I feel grateful for much liberty. At the Lovefeast my soul was refreshed, especially whilst brother T——.spoke.

He was once a classmate of mine; and was brought to God at Torquay at the time I was. The scenes and circumstances were fresh in my mind as he related his experience, giving an account of his conversion 'when attending Mr. HENLEY'S chapel,' as he called it. I could not but be grateful to that God who by His providence and grace had preserved us in safety to this time. There were several witnesses to the doctrine of sanctification, and one person realized the blessing at the meeting.

"11.—This morning my soul was in a happy heavenly frame, sweetly drawn out after God, especially during family prayer. I did indeed feel it good to approach a throne of grace, and found a present answer.

"Preached at Crocombe, the place where, last week, I pleaded so hard for the house; had a very good and exceedingly attentive congregation; felt great liberty to use plainness of speech, while explaining the nature of conversion and urging its necessity.

"13.—Yesterday I attended the Baptist Missionary Meeting at Watchet. It was an interesting time. I truly rejoice in the prosperity of this cause.

"Preached at half-past six this evening at Monksilver, under the tree in the centre of the village; had many hearers, but they kept at a distance. 'The Son of Man shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire.' The Lord assisted me to be faithful. I think I shall be clear of the blood of the inhabitants of this place.

"Returned, and gave an exhortation at Williton, on prayer; particularly requesting attention to morning and family prayer.

"15.—Good Prayer Meeting at five o'clock; company much improved. At Cleeve, too, a nice congregation, partly owing, no doubt, to their being visited from house to house.

"20.—Williton. Quarterly Meeting. We have an increase of thirty-five members. On a review of the work of God through the circuit, it was agreed by the meeting to set apart the first Friday in May as a day of thanksgiving for the prosperity with which we have been visited, and for earnest and united prayer for a more abundant outpouring of the Spirit. My mind has been deeply affected to-day with an account of the afflicting

Providence which has called five of our Missionaries and their families from their work in the West Indies. I have a wish to offer myself to help fill up the ranks.

"21.—The Missionaries constantly in my mind, and a desire to be a candidate. I have mentioned my thoughts to my Superintendent and others. Mr. S. thinks me adapted for the work, but advises me to be cautious. I feel my insufficiency, but am confident if God call me to it, he will qualify. O Lord, undertake for me and direct. Suffer me not to be deceived by any false emotions of my own mind.

"Attended Prayer Meeting at five o'clock, and then went round the village to invite the people to evening preaching; wrote to my father and mentioned the subject of my going as a Missionary, requesting his advice and prayers.

"30.—Watchet. Three new members at class, who bid fair for heaven. Two have been awful characters. Above twenty came into Mr. Bond's this morning to family prayer. Surely the Lord is working amongst this people.

"At six I took my stand under the tree at Dunster, and asked, 'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' Congregation good and attentive."

The impression on Mr. HENLEY'S mind, that he ought to offer himself for the Missionary work, had at this time a powerful influence upon him. Yet his intelligent friends were much divided in their opinions respecting it; and some were decidedly hostile to it. Many believed that his health was inadequate to a foreign climate; while others, who glorified the grace of God in him, thought his present usefulness a sufficient indication that he was already in his place of duty. His own opinion, too, was by no means settled or clear on the subject, and the result was to occasion him much uneasiness for a considerable time. His exertions, however, in God's cause were not at all relaxed, nor was his ardent piety less remarkable. The following judicious letter, written about this time, is sufficiently in proof of this.

"Dunster, 1826.

"To Mr. E. H.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am glad to hear you are giving attention to reading. Reading is the food of thought, as thought is the cause of action. Get into a habit of reading, and you will find after a time that you will be at a loss when you have not some book in hand. And I would advise you, in order to get a fixedness of attention, to have in general only one book in reading at a time. Paley's works will require much attention; I do not think it the sort of reading particularly suited to you at the present time. I think I have before observed to you that the improvement of the heart should be always connected with the improvement of the intellect, and the former considered as of *first* importance, and as the chief object to be sought in our reading and studies. Though Paley's works are not inimical to piety—far otherwise; yet they appear to me to be less conducive to experimental religion than some others, and I hope you do feel in earnest to realize experimental religion, and are anxiously seeking salvation. If so, I am persuaded you want something more to the point than Paley. I would recommend 'Wesley's Sermons' and 'Journal,' 'Doddridge's Rise and Progress,' 'Fletcher's Appeal' and 'Address to Seekers of Salvation.' I do not mean to say, lay aside Paley entirely. To others of more studious habits they will be interesting; but just now something else will better suit your state of religious experience.

"As to your question on controversy, I am really grieved that Torquay should be so infected with that bane of true religion and enemy to simplicity. I feel now quite averse to such subjects as you speak of; although I used to be fond of entering into controversy. However, so it is. As you have urged me, I will say a word on the subject of God's foreknowledge. It is well known that many think the doctrine of God's foreknowledge a stronghold for Calvinistic predestination; and whilst some have, as a consequence, embraced the latter, others have rejected the both, for, to avoid the absurdity of supposing God to have predestinated some men to sin on and perish for ever, they

have denied absolute foreknowledge to be possible. Yet it is evident there is a foreknowledge, and a predestination. God foreknew that some men would repent and believe, and others rebel and perish. But then His foreknowledge does not make them *repent* or *rebel;* for instance, I foreknow that some men will repent and others will not, which would not less have happened unforeknown: the letter I am writing will reach Torquay, but then my foreknowledge does not bring it to pass: I foreknow the sun will rise to-morrow, but the sun will not rise in consequence of my foreknowing it—it would rise if I did not. Just so, God's foreknowledge has no influence on man's actions. The predestination of the scriptures respects characters, not persons. The finally impenitent are predestinated to wrath. The penitent and believing are predestinated to life. Let us take the plain declarations of scripture as they stand, and we shall never doubt that God is loving to every man, and 'willeth all men to be saved;' and whilst the plan of salvation by faith secures all the glory to God, it entails all the condemnation of the wicked on their own heads, for wickedly refusing or neglecting so great a salvation, so dearly purchased and so freely offered. You ask me to explain, 'Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.' Most certainly it does not mean the election of the one to heaven, and the reprobation of the other to perdition; only the election of one to certain privileges in this life, superior to the other. The term 'hated' must be taken in the same sense in which we are called to hate father, &c., for the sake of Christ; that is, to *love less*, for the Lord is loving to every man. The declaration respecting Jacob and Esau most certainly alludes to the one having been chosen to be the father of the peculiar people and the progenitor of the Messiah. But I am pleased to hear you are seeking for more religion. You ask how you shall get faith. This is a very important question, to which I answer, Ask of 'God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.' Prayer, constant and persevering prayer, will surely prevail:—first, because God will give you the power to believe in answer to prayer; and second, because earnest prayer will operate on your own mind, disposing you to make the effort that is re-

quired on your part. For ever remember, that whilst the power to believe is from God, the act itself must be your own. Many seem to look at faith as a something given only to certain persons and at certain times, and in such a way as to make believers of them by force, so that it is impossible they can avoid it. Now this view of faith is very erroneous and dangerous, because it is in contradiction to those scriptures which command men to believe as a duty and denounce eternal woe for not believing. Now, can we suppose God is such a hard master, 'gathering where he hath not strawed,' as to command men to believe in order to be saved without giving them the power to believe, and consign to eternal torments for not doing that which they never had the power to do? Oh no, no, no! God is love: so that saving faith is the personal and voluntary concurrence of the will and affection with the divine influence working within. The reason why some do and others do not believe, is not that power was not given, but that it was not exercised. Hence appears the impropriety of the expression so often heard, 'I cannot believe.' If by this is meant we cannot believe without divine assistance, it is quite correct; but if it be an insinuation that this help is not at hand—that God withholds it from those who desire it, and consequently their unbelief is unavoidable, it is an insult to Jehovah, as it charges him with a want of benevolence and faithfulness. And this view of faith which I am supposing, is not only erroneous but dangerous. It is calculated to lead people to rest on their lees;—to go on in a state of darkness and condemnation, under the foolish idea of waiting God's good time. Oh, my brother! God's good time is *now*. Now is the accepted time. Oh, believe the declaration of God's word concluding all under sin, denouncing a curse on 'every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them,' and you will then feel your need of pardon and deliverance. This faith you must first exercise in order to know and feel your state, and you will be constrained then to

> 'Groan the sinners only plea—
> God be merciful to me!'

and thus believe the declaration of God's word respecting the plan of salvation—the sacrifice and death of Christ in the sinner's stead. There is full and free pardon to all who come to Christ Jesus: but there is no other name given under heaven by which you can be saved. The Holy Spirit is promised to apply the merits of Christ's death to your soul and regenerate your nature. Believe these promises, that is, simply take God at his word. Rely on His promises for yourself. Venture your soul upon Christ, and firmly expect an immediate accomplishment of these His promises in your own soul. In this way, by agonizing prayer and restless desire, be looking every moment for the blessing of pardon and holiness; and do not cheat yourself out of the blessing by placing it at a distance, and thinking that to prepare yourself better for its reception, you must repent more first. Be resolved immediately to part with all your sins, and give to God your heart as it is, and He will make it what it should be. O that this may find you already rejoicing in the liberty of the children of God! If so, you will understand better what I have said on the subject; but if not, O let me entreat you, begin to pray for it. Never rest short of the witness of the Spirit that you are born of God. Strive to exercise the faith of reliance until you have the faith of assurance. It is your privilege, for God is no respecter of persons. I bless Him that I enjoy not only the witness of His faithfulness to forgive sin, but to cleanse from all unrighteousness. With humility and gratitude I desire to bear my testimony that the blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse and to keep me clean. We have in this circuit several witnesses to the truth of this doctrine. I met a class a fortnight ago, in which were five besides myself, all of whom have been stirred up to seek it during the little revival God has graciously visited us with. Others are seeking it, and many who have gone on for years without pardon have obtained it. Yours affectionately."

"MAY 1.—A letter from my father last night, who wishes me to go to London to assist my brother in putting him in the way of the business I used to manage. I do not feel comfortable in the prospect. My mind seems averse to secular concerns; and though the

labour is nothing, nor the affair in any way occupying my attention as formerly, and I shall probably have an opportunity of resting from preaching a little, and hearing some eminent ministers, yet I would much rather be in my regular work. Whatever keeps me from my appointments has lately appeared unpleasant. The only thing that reconciles me to the journey is the consideration that it is a duty that I owe to my father and family.

"7.—Washford. A lively meeting and a good congregation. Brother Avery had called at nearly every house in the village with me previously.

"14.—Williton. 'Quench not the Spirit.' Met the society, and endeavoured to point out 'the more excellent way.' Recommended frequent devotional exercises in the closet—particular care in redeeming time—conversation on religion in all their intercourse—abstinence—fasting. Felt determined to be more careful in these matters.

"15.—The children of the several Sunday Schools met to-day at the new chapel at Washford. I spoke to them, from 'Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.' After taking tea with the teachers and friends, we went into the court of the poor-house, and had a prayer meeting in the open air.

"16.—Set out for London. On the coach, had a long conversation with a sea captain on religion. Was enabled faithfully to warn him of his danger: he acknowledged himself unhappy and unsafe, but still pleaded for sin. Felt gratified on my arrival at Bristol with a sight of some old friends from Torquay. Heard part of a sermon at St. Philip's, whither I hastened, on 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' Slept very comfortably at the 'Bush.'

"18.—Reached my old lodgings in safety. Found poor Mrs. H. a widow; her trials have been great. Went in the evening to see James and Thyrza, and am glad to hear they are again united with the people of God, and alive to the best things. Heard of a circumstance which surprised, and once would have grieved me; but my will has been so lost in the will of God, since I received his sanctifying love, that I have

been able to confide fully in divine guidance. All my desire is to ascertain and do the will of my heavenly Father. Went to the same class with Thyrza, in which I met more than two years ago. My brother has arrived, and I am pleased to find he is apparently in earnest for the salvation of his soul: have conversed closely, and prayed with him: he gives a delightful account of the work of God amongst the young people in the Sunday School. Have also had the advice of an old medical friend, as to his opinion of my constitution for the West Indies: he says it will not do for me. Lord, direct me. Walked until wearied, introducing my brother to the friends with whom I have formerly done business.

"21.—Heard the celebrated Edward Irving on 'the sins of the nation.' This is the third sermon I have heard him preach, and I have several times attended meetings where he has spoken. Cannot but consider him a great and good man, though very singular. Heard Mr. Anderson at Battlebridge—a good lively sermon. Was much pleased on remaining at a society meeting, at his simple, faithful, and affectionate address. One observation he made I think very just, and will appear so to all who understand the history of Methodism: 'There never was a time when there was more religion in our societies, as a whole, than now; perhaps formerly there were more particular instances of persons eminent for piety.'

"22.—Left town for Taunton in the afternoon. Had an opportunity of speaking a word for God to the coachman and guard; the latter appeared to be a gentleman. An officer soon joined us. The Lord helped me to stand firmly for the truth. The guard acknowledged himself guilty, and thanked me for boldly and unsparingly warning him of the consequences of known sin; but he thought if God were really so strict as I made out, scarcely one of a thousand could be saved. I said, supposing that to be true, however awful the consideration, yet we must not compromise anything. I asked if he were happy in his solitary moments: he confessed he was not. The conversation was long and interesting.

"27.—Well, I am glad to be at home once more. I

bless God, I have had peace and some refreshing seasons since I set off for London; but oh! I feel the want of closet devotion so much. I think I would not be in business again on any consideration.

"30.—On my way to my appointment this evening, was overtaken by the rain, and called at a farm-house for shelter; found the family extremely ignorant, but glad to hear of Jesus. After much conversation, (for I spoke to each individually,) I proposed praying. A poor old woman begged, on account of infirmity, to be excused kneeling; but in the midst I happened to open my eyes, and she was still sewing. I immediately stopped, and requested she would lay aside her work until we had finished; she thought that because she could not kneel, she could not pray. The family thanked me heartily, and asked me to call again. I was wet through on reaching Roadwater, where I was grieved to the heart to find that the wake and the club had taken the greater part of my congregation. Two or three are young in the way, and I began to tremble lest they should be drawn aside. After a little hesitation, I resolved on going to the public house, and by perseverance I got access into the club room. The first person I saw was ——, who had been raised from the brink of death; he was half intoxicated and dancing: another member was also in the room. I talked—tried to persuade, and did my utmost. I expostulated until their music ceased; some insulted, others listened; they pleaded as an excuse, that business took them there, and could hardly be convinced that an hour spent in this way would do them more harm than their benefit society could do them good all their lives. Thus I left them, depressed and concerned for the little class at Roadwater. Whilst in prayer at the meeting, my feelings of pity for the poor souls in the club room were such as I cannot describe. I was almost overpowered; but God comforted and blessed me. I trust He will keep them from falling quite away. They both came to me before I left, and expressed themselves as grateful that I had gone after them. What will be the result, I know not.

"JUNE 4.—Visited a dying woman at Mr. S.'s request, who sent a man and horse for me. She had re-

peatedly attended our chapel, and during her illness had often called for me to pray with her, but the family had never sent. Now she entreated her father, and he says he did his best by reading some prayers. When I arrived, she was too far gone to understand anything. I prayed for her, and spoke to her parents, who appeared to be affected. Preached four times today, and gave tickets. A good day indeed to my soul. I have had a lift Zionward.

"5.—Found at Timberscombe, where my appointment was, that the people were holding a wake. Whilst in Mr. B.'s shop, saw two lads fighting, driven to it by men who stood by; went and succeeded in separating them, notwithstanding the endeavours of several drunkards. As it was not likely I should get a congregation in doors, I asked leave to stand on a stock, a little distance from the crowd; about thirty, attracted by the singing, came, and I announced, 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' When I had finished the fight began again. Mr. B. assisted, and we quelled it. As the music had ceased and there was such a number of people standing about, I felt a wish to speak again to them; so I got on a large block of wood just before the door, in the midst of the rabble, and gave out—

'The great Archangel's trump shall sound,' &c.

Whilst singing, a great many joined us; but when we finished, I found there was too much noise to pray, and I raised my voice as loud as possible, and begged to ask one question:—'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' Most of the people thronged around me and the greater part were attentive, whilst I noticed the comparative value of the world and the soul, not in the way of sermonizing, but by pointed remarks. I applied it to the circumstances and characters before me, and endeavoured to make it interest the crowd to the utmost. I asked, what is the world worth? It is worth *little* to a man *in health;* but what is it worth to a *dying* man? What is the soul worth? Several drunken fellows did all they could by singing, &c., to disturb me, so as to drown my voice; but I believe I was heard above all. Sometimes I ad-

dressed myself particularly to them, and endeavoured to gain their attention; then the others would say, 'Never you mind them, Sir, we can hear you very well.' When I had concluded and sung, I attempted to pray, but had not got on many minutes before I was accosted by one of the worst of them: he had gone into a public house to fetch some beer for me, and forced his way through to hand it to me, notwithstanding the persuasions of many that he would not; I put the cup to my lips, thinking it the best way to silence him, after which he was very quiet. I thanked those who had heard me attentively; they seemed deeply affected and thanked me in return, drunkards and all. And whilst they were now all silent and attentive, I again spoke for about ten minutes. They testified their satisfaction in a mob-like way, by giving the 'Methodist parson' three hurrahs. This is such an attempt as I never before made; but I am not at all dissatisfied with the results. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul!'

"7.—Heard the African preach preparatory to our Missionary Meeting. After the service, I walked part of the way with him to Watchet. We prayed together under the hedge before we separated.

"21.—Have been much tempted to heaviness, particularly when alone and in closet exercises—a wandering of thoughts from one subject to another, in a way which prevents that fervour that should be felt. I am not conscious of consenting to any temptation to sin; but I am conscious of a tendency to inactivity and of a thousand deficiencies in my conduct. It seems to me I am doing nothing for God, or nothing as I ought to do. Yet I thank him I do feel I love him supremely and desire to serve him.

"Visited poor old M. L——. She is as simple as a child, and as desirous of making sure work as ever I witnessed. 'O! how glad,' she said, 'how glad I am that you are come. I did so look to see you again. I could not be happy till last night. I could not feel the power of God, nor faith, nor love. I feared I was not in the way, but now I rejoice in God my Saviour; yet I do look for more faith and more love. I cannot be satisfied. Do you think I am in the way?'

"29.—Preached this morning at five o'clock. After

breakfast visited new members. Dined at the Parsonage. Talked plainly and faithfully to my dear friends. I trust they will not be offended with me. Met classes for tickets, and refused to give them to those who would not meet regularly.

"30.—Fast day. My mind much grieved and perplexed. Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that my desire is to humble myself before thee and thee only. Would that I could keep this day alone; but my endeavours are fruitless. Help me to look so to thy glory that the voice of unkindness may not affect me. Thou knowest I do not wish to be thought more righteous than my neighbour, but that I do this from a sense of duty and not from pride.

"JULY 8.—My mind was brought into a peculiarly sweet and heavenly frame whilst preaching last night on 'the more excellent way,' and exhorting the people to enter upon it. God grant I may be such a christian as I want the people to be. Why may I not be as eminent for holiness as Fletcher? Have I not the same God, who is no respecter of persons? Have I not the same promises, which are 'yea and amen?' Do I not already receive grace for grace from the same infinite fulness? And why may I not receive as largely and as constantly? Surely God is willing. So great as Mr Fletcher I cannot expect to be, but as holy in heart and life I may be. Lord, make me more holy, that I may be useful to thy church and the world, and bring more glory to thy name. Amen.

"9.—A good day to my soul. Felt the presence of God in the midst of his people in the several services,

'Fill every want my spirit feels,
And break off every chain.'

"16.—A letter from my dear brother Richard, with the most heart-cheering information. O! how shall I praise God? My brothers and sisters have all set their hearts to seek the Lord, and all but one have obtained the forgiveness of their sins. Several of my cousins, too, have joined them. Forty are added to the Society. All glory to God! Well, I will evidence my gratitude by giving myself up more fully to Him. Surely I am laid under additional obligation to be holy. May God

help me to believe for a deeper baptism of the Spirit! I want it just now. I want it for the happiness and comfort of my own soul. I want it as a preparation for the duties of the day. O give unto me, that I may give out unto thy people! O touch my heart with a holy flame, and let it burn and blaze, that whilst I am speaking for thee to the people, and from the people to thee, I may be in the Spirit of Sabbath ordinances! O God, 'Let all the people praise thee!'

"24.—At Bilbrook. 'If thou knewest the gift of God,' &c. I believe many with myself did indeed drink deep into the wells of salvation. Met the class: many athirst for full salvation.

"29.—Wrote to my representative, stating my feelings relative to the Missionary work, and offering to go immediately.

"AUGUST 6.—Prayer Meeting at six. Class at seven. Preached at nine from—'Who hath believed our report?' At half-past ten at Williton, 'Now advise what answer,' &c. At half-past two at Washford. Returned to Williton to receive the sacrament from Mr. Shepherd. At half-past six at Dunster; after which met the class.

"This was a laborious and trying day, but God proportioned my strength. Much peace and satisfaction in the prospect of going on a foreign station.

"7.—Visited to say 'Good bye.' The thought that it is the last time I shall see the people almost overcomes me, and their affection is beyond anything I expected.

"9.—This morning took leave of the dear family at Bilbrook; but I cannot describe my feelings. My heart was so full I could scarcely touch any breakfast. Whilst giving out the hymn at family prayer,

'Peace be on this house bestowed,'

was quite overcome. I never recollect to have felt so unable to sing as then; I could neither join nor give out the verses; the rest were the same, excepting good old Mr. Symons. After he had prayed, I added a few words and then tore myself away, not expecting to see them again.

"Met the dear class. How much cause I have to praise God for the testimony borne by the members of benefits received through the ministry of so weak an

instrument. *To God be all the glory!* I think I felt grateful without any mixture of pride, humbled under a sense of God's goodness, and led to pledge myself afresh to him.

"12.—Reached Torquay. Praise the Lord for what He hath done for my dear family!

"13.—Preached in the chapel—'Where sin abounded,' &c. The people gladly received the word. Felt much liberty and enlargement, whilst speaking of the all-sufficiency of grace to counteract and destroy sin. It seemed to be just what they were prepared for. Their eagerness and joy I never shall forget. Met one of the new classes after preaching. My soul rejoiced to hear so many young people speak clearly of the goodness of God to them. Many are panting for sanctification. My sister Eliza received it this afternoon. Glory to God! In the evening, after preaching, met the society and related my experience; bore my testimony for God, and pressed the people to seek the same blessing. Two or three obtained the witness that sin was all destroyed.

"15.—Preached at five in the morning. Drank tea at my brother M.'s with several friends; the conversation turned on sanctification, and the method of obtaining it. It was a season long to be remembered. After tea, preached on board ship, at Torquay, from 'The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee.' Many gentlemen and several clergymen present. As I had engaged to meet the young men, we repaired to the Bethel room at the close of preaching: but as many came, I merely gave them an exhortation, instead of having a class meeting. We had on the whole, a very blessed, yet extraordinary meeting. I concluded again and again, after publishing for preaching at five the next morning. I was at last actually obliged to go from one to another, and individually request them to retire. I have since been led to question whether I ought to have done so, and whether I should not rather have remained all night. I think I should hardly do so again. It was twelve o'clock ere the meeting closed. This surely is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. I have since heard that Sir —— was at the door a great part of the time. Five or six received sanctification.

"18.—Read at a society meeting several extracts from 'Wesley's Plain Account,' for the purpose of establishing those who had lately received the blessing, and of stirring others up to seek it; also as my Sunday night's sermon had been so much talked about as though it were something new, I thought it would be seasonable to bring Mr. Wesley to bear me out.

"20.—Preached on board ship; also at St. Mary-church, out of doors. Met a class of nearly forty; several had never been before; ten bore testimony that Jesus hath not only power to forgive sin, but to cleanse from all unrighteousness, eight of whom have received this blessing within the last few days.

"21.—Lovefeast this evening at Barton. Felt it good to be there. Gave a pretty full account of my experience for the last twelve months. Was particularly struck with the fact, that the last lovefeast I attended in the neighbourhood was at Barton; and that standing on the spot on which I then stood a year ago, I had pledged myself never to rest until I was fully saved from sin; and now I could praise God that He had saved me.

"AUGUST 24.—Preached at five in the morning, and soon after left Torquay. Oh! dear to my heart is my native place, never before so dear as now!"

The labours of Mr. HENLEY in the Dunster circuit had now terminated. The quotations from this part of his journal have been more extensively made than will be done hereafter, because this was the commencement of a ministry which he fulfilled with motives equally exalted, piety equally ardent, and energy and perseverance equally remarkable to the end of his life. In the pulpit, he was at once popular with the congregation, and profitable to the members of the church. His subjects were generally of a practical kind, and were judiciously selected; his expositions of truth were clear and simple; his illustrations most commonly borrowed from the word of God, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual;" his style of argument was popular and convincing; and the whole was clothed in language at once forcible and correct. It was utterly impossible that, overwhelmed as he was with a pressure of public engagements, he should give that atten-

tion to the formation of a classical and polished style of composition, which he might have done had his habits been more secluded and sedentary. But a naturally good taste and correct ear, together with the habit which he always cultivated of reading with fixed attention, happily preserved him from glaring faults, and enabled him to express himself always with propriety, and frequently in a manner beautiful and impressive in a very high degree. In defining the doctrines of religion, he was remarkably successful;—his views were just and clear, and his language was exceedingly cautious and accurate. His reasoning seldom failed to carry conviction with it; and there was a frankness in his manner—an obvious sincerity—a downright honesty of purpose, which seemed to say, "We speak that we do know," and which had a very telling effect upon his congregation. But it was in arousing appeals to the conscience that he eminently excelled. In these he would pourtray the character to which he addressed himself in a manner so graphic, that the sinner could not but feel he was individually concerned, and would have his attention firmly rivetted, while with energy most impassioned, and with an eloquence truly sublime, he would describe the enormity of sin—the danger of the sinner—the necessity of repentance—the hazard of delay—the duty of decision—the readiness of God to have mercy—the atonement of Christ—the way of reconciliation—and the blessed results of a present faith in the Saviour, until frequently his hearers would be borne away with excitement equal to his own, and groans of anguish and cries for mercy would mingle with and well nigh drown the voice of the preacher. At such seasons, his appearance was peculiarly striking. His tall and slender figure would appear to rise above his ordinary height; his brilliant dark blue eye would sparkle with animation; every feature would be lighted up with that deep concern and intelligent earnestness which characterized his language; his delivery seemed to be at once unusually rapid, and unusually distinct; every word told upon the mind; and the tone, the gesture, the look—all that met the sense—contributed to render the impression irresistible. The intelligent observer would be compelled to apply to

him the remark of a celebrated divine on another preacher, "Others *may* do good, *but he must.*" His course of study was judiciously chosen. The scriptures were first and last, and chief in his estimation. He, like Henry Martyn, read other books, only while they tended to enhance his value of the sacred oracles; but subordinate to these, he studied with careful attention the sermons and works of Wesley, Fletcher, Benson, and Clarke, with the excellent selection contained in the Christian Library. He had a happy and interesting method of referring in conversation to the topics on which he had been reading, and thus fixing the impression which they had produced on his mind. His sermons were long and deeply studied. After praying over a text which had arrested his attention, he generally sketched a rough outline, and then discussed point by point in his own mind the several members of his discourse. He offered not that to the Lord which cost him nothing: he brought *beaten oil* for the light of the sanctuary, and approved himself to his hearers as well instructed unto the kingdom of God. But it was at the throne of grace, and in close communion with the Most High that he chiefly gathered strength. He was eminently a man of prayer. Frequently would he spend hours together in the holy exercise. The writer recollects one night, when he occupied the same room with him, that before retiring to rest his devotions were protracted to an unusual length; and such was the fervent and intense earnestness of his spirit, that he seemed oblivious of all around him, and swallowed up in an agony of wrestling with God. At length he retired to bed, but at about three arose, awoke his drowsy companion, saying, 'Come, brother A., let us get up and pray;' and for two hours he maintained intercourse with heaven; then went off to the early prayer meeting, and on leaving it came back to his closet again, and resumed the hallowing employment. If the old divine was correct, who said, "*Bene orasse est bene studuisse,*" then JOHN HENLEY was a student of no common order.

His transparent simplicity of character, his ardent piety and warmth of affection, endeared him to all who knew him; and abundant proof was afforded of this

when he was about to take his leave of the circuit. The intelligence of his removal was received with universal lamentations. Old and young crowded to take a fond farewell of their beloved minister, and to shower blessings on his head: and even to this day, the recollection of his person and labours is embalmed in the most holy sanctuary of the memory of many in that neighbourhood, who will be, through grace, his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

CHAP. V.

"SO MIGHTILY GREW THE WORD OF THE LORD AND PREVAILED."—ACTS XIX., 19.

Mr. Henley appointed to a station at home—Witney—Journal—Letter to his Brother—Encouraging indications—Journal—Southleigh—Self-dedication—Letter to Mr. Symons—Incidents at Torquay—Miss S.—Journal—Out-of-door Preaching—Minster—Revivals of Religion—Evil-speaking reproved—Letter to his Parents—State of the work—Journal—Awful occurrence—Remarks—Mr. H.'s zeal and labours—Letter to Rev. John Smith—Personal experience—To Rev. Joseph Earnshaw—State of the Circuit—To his Brother—Spiritual declension unnecessary—Letter—Journal—Opposition—Striking occurrence—Legal measures—Letters—Indications of the revival of religion in the Circuit—Third Minister appointed.

1826—27.

THE impressions on Mr. HENLEY'S mind relative to the Missionary work, and his willingness to receive a foreign appointment, were communicated in due course to his fathers and brethren in Conference. It was, however decided, after mature deliberation, that his place of duty for the present appeared to be in the work at home, and he was therefore appointed to the Witney Circuit. He was neither gratified nor disappointed at this decision. His call to go abroad was never so clear to his own mind as to satisfy him; and while he was ready to follow the guidance of Divine Providence, he was as much prepared to resume his labours in his own country as to preach the gospel to the heathen. Regarding, therefore, the decision of the Conference as an intimation of the will of God, he cheerfully coincided in it. His interest in the Missionary work, however, never abated. He generally succeeded in infusing a Missionary spirit into the societies among whom he laboured; and his earnest appeals both from the platform and the pulpit in behalf of the sacred undertaking were deeply felt and long remembered.

Witney is a small but populous town situated eight miles from Oxford, and principally supported by its extensive blanket manufactories. A Methodist cause had existed there for many years, and a respectable chapel had been built, which was well attended, and connected with which was a numerous society. The state of religion was, however, far from prosperous. A rent had taken place in the society a few years before, which had led to the erection of another chapel; and the members who remained, though free from party divisions, were in a languid and lifeless state. The meetings for prayer and for christian communion were thinly attended; the preached word was seldom "accompanied with signs following;" while many who had professed religion grew cold and turned back from the way of life. To a station like this Mr. HENLEY was peculiarly adapted. His ardent piety, his glowing zeal, his untiring activity, his indomitable courage and perseverance, qualified him to arouse and stimulate a slumbering people; and his late visit to Torquay, and the special blessing which crowned his labours there, had kindled afresh the fire of love within his heart, and disposed him to efforts, if possible, more energetic, more self-sacrificing than ever. In this spirit he entered upon his new circuit; and cheered by the zealous and judicious co-operation of his kind Superintendent (the Rev. Corbett Cooke), prosecuted his labours with diligent fidelity and with great success. He thus describes the state of his mind at this period.

"AUGUST 27, 1826.—Felt thankful to God to consider myself in the scene of my future labours. Commenced my ministry in Witney, from—'Christ in you the hope of glory.' Met the society after preaching at night. Addressed them on the importance of union in a church and the advantages of eminent piety. I fear they are not so much alive to God as could be wished. Here is the wood, the altar, and the sacrifice: Lord, send the fire from above!

"28.—Chadbury. Felt I was among praying people. My soul was much blessed whilst preaching.

"29.—Finstock. Preached and dined in a house where Mr. Wesley has often been entertained and preached. Went in the afternoon to see the forest;

beautifully romantic scenery. Whilst my guide was nutting, I got among the bushes to converse with Him whose presence makes my heaven. Visited the sick, and met with a case of extreme distress, yet a monument of suffering grace. I could scarcely refrain from weeping that human nature, when dignified with all that is amiable and possessed of religion, must be liable to such afflictions. O sin!

"SEPTEMBER 1.—Wished to fast to-day, but dared not go too far, as I have suffered in my health. Hope to use abstinence once a week at least. Called with Mr. Cooke on some of the friends.

"3.—Morning Prayer Meeting; only five present. My mind much drawn out in prayer for the dear people at Torquay. I feel deeply interested in the welfare of those lately brought to God, especially for such as bear testimony to the glory of divine grace, that the blood of Christ cleanseth fully, and keeps them clean."

The gracious Lord speedily vouchsafed the tokens of his approval of his servant's labours, and soon after he entered on the circuit several were truly converted to God, while others obtained "the heaven of perfect love." To some instances of this kind allusion is made in the following letter.

"Witney, September 4, 1825.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have delayed writing a little longer than I intended, partly for want of time and partly from a wish to know as much as I could of my circuit first. I trust I shall be very comfortable. Here are kind friends; congregations pretty good; society respectable, though I grieve to say they are not so alive to God as is desirable. I have every reason to believe I shall be very happy with Mr. Cooke, and shall be more at home than in my last circuit, and have less travelling, so that all I can desire in a temporal sense I shall have. I arrived late on Saturday night. Preached in the morning at Witney, from Col. i., 27—8, 'Christ in you,' &c.—Afternoon, Rom. v., 10.—Evening, Matt. xvi., 26. After which I addressed the society, and had above a hundred present. Monday, preached at Chadbury; society about sixty, apparently in a good state.—Tues-

day, Finstock, in a farm house; good congregation.—Wednesday, Hamsfield; a new place; house crowded; many could not come in.—Thursday, Hamborough; house filled.—Friday, Prayer Meeting at Witney. My second sabbath I spent in Witney. I preached in the street, in a neglected part of the town; and one man, not in the habit of attending our ministry, was deeply wrought upon, and came to class the same day. This was the first fruit I had here. Met the society in the evening; related my experience; the people seemed to be a little stirred up. One of the members that had been long seeking obtained justifying faith, and at a Prayer Meeting afterwards a very wicked young man was deeply wrought upon, and resolved on giving his heart to God. I published for a Prayer Meeting at five the next morning. Some people laughed at it, saying I should be alone. We had, however, to their surprise above fifty. I believe my appointment is of God; but I feel at being so far from those who are so dear to me, the dear friends at Dunster and at Torquay. I never before felt towards that place as since my last visit I trust my visit to them was not in vain."

The prominence which Mr. HENLEY gave to the doctrine of christian perfection in his public ministry, awakened general attention to that deeply important subject, and led to great searchings of heart. Happily the people to whom he preached it, heard not to cavil and object, but to weigh and consider; like the noble Bereans, 'they searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so;' and therefore, like them, 'many of them believed.'

"SEPTEMBER 8.—Preached at Southleigh—the place where our venerable Mr. Wesley commenced his ministry, and preached his first sermon. The people listened attentively whilst I told them, 'Ye must be born again.'

"14.—Spent the morning in visiting the people at Freeland. God blesses me when I am faithful with those I have intercourse with: and O! how pained has my mind been when I have let an opportunity slip unimproved. May God help me to be more diligent and faithful in this particular, and qualify me for this important part of my duty. Surely 'the lines are fallen

to me in pleasant places.' I have been through the circuit, and have every prospect of temporal comfort. I have met with some encouragement, but no very remarkable instances of good. O God, arise! stretch out thine arm in the sight of the people; and O my Father, baptize *me* afresh with the Holy Ghost! Make me holy, that I may be useful to this people. I have been hitherto an unprofitable servant. Forgive my unfaithfulness, and let not past neglect hinder thy mercy to me; nor suffer my unfaithfulness to operate as an injury to thy church. Make me personally holy, that I may be ministerially faithful, and successful in winning souls to Christ. Now, O Lord thou knowest all things, and requirest truth in the inward parts: thou knowest that in my heart I desire (O strengthen this desire!) to renew my covenant with thee; and I do now on my knees give myself afresh to thee! My God, I am thine by an entire dedication: accept me through Christ! Save me. Amen and amen! JOHN HENLEY."

Acts of self dedication, similar to the above, frequently occur in Mr. HENLEY'S papers; and while they prove how sincere and fervent was his piety, they prove also how important he esteemed it to adopt the most solemn and formal methods of confirming the

"——Happy bond that seals our vows
To Him who merits all our love."

"15.—Whilst meeting two classes to-night, my soul was watered, and I felt confidence that the renewal of my covenant with God was acceptable in His sight and ratified in heaven. A letter from ——, who has met with great opposition in consequence of professing to have received sanctification. When will *professors* cease their discouragements?

"18.—Notwithstanding the great labours of yesterday, I feel quite well to day. Praise God for health and strength. I feel resolved to spend it in His cause. The result is encouraging: one person was deeply wrought upon, and came to the class in the afternoon.

"19.—Prayer meeting at five o'clock. Some of the friends thought I should be alone; but had a good attendance."

The following letter addressed to his much loved

friends, the family at Bilbrook, will at once evince the grateful affection of his spirit, and delineate the progress of the great work in Devonshire, to which allusion has been already made.

Witney, September 20, 1826.

"To Mr. and Mrs. Symons.—Whilst a request on your part and a promise on mine bind me to write my dear friends at Bilbrook, I assure you I feel no want of inclination, and require no other prompter than the memory of the heart. And though I know you would not thank me for filling my paper by telling you how sensible I am of my obligations to the kind friends in the Dunster circuit, and especially to you and your family, yet you will not think it mere sentiment, if I tell you *I think of you—love you—pray for you* in my best and happiest moments. The times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord we have had together in public with the congregation, at the class, and at the family altar, are seasons not to be forgotten. Praise God, I did indeed feel I got good to *my own soul* whilst going in and out amongst you; and though the thought that I am not to enjoy a repetition of these seasons at times casts a gloom over my mind for the moment, yet a consideration that the order of Providence is the order of infinite wisdom and goodness, again dispels the cloud; and whilst nature feels a mixture of pleasure and pain, faith, recognizing in all things the hand of God, triumphantly exclaims, '*Whatever is—is best.*' I doubt not that my appointment to this circuit is of God. I have been at nearly every place, and believe I shall be comfortable. We have more pastoral visiting, but less travelling and preaching than with you. But though in *many* respects it is a very agreeable circuit, yet alas! vital godliness, I fear, is at a *low ebb*. We have the altar and the sacrifice, but it is grievous to see *how little fire*. In one little place there seems to be a zealous lively people; and we are not without hope that the fire will spread, till all shall catch the flame, and all partake the glorious bliss. Praise God, I feel His Spirit and blessing accompanying me in my work; and I am confident He will continue his presence so long as I am faithful. My superintendent is a very excellent

man, and is much respected in the town. I live with him. If the Lord deign to make me useful, I shall be happy, I believe; if not, *no temporal* comfort will satisfy me. If I know myself, I would rather live in a hovel and lie on straw, or suffer any privation of a temporal kind, so I might do something for Him. Let me encourage a hope that you will pray for me, that I may be successful in winning souls to Christ.

"From Mr. D. you heard of my passing through Exeter; I wished much I could have come your way, and have spent a day with you, to have told you of something of what I had seen of the prosperity of God's work at Torquay. You are aware that my heart had rejoiced at the information my brother's letter gave me, and which I read to you; in consequence, I went home big with expectation, but when I had seen the grace of God, I could not but exclaim, 'The half was not told me.' And though I witnessed many trying scenes of affliction among friends, and in my own family, still the prosperity of the work of God counterbalanced all. You will believe I was not idle during my holiday, when I tell you I preached in the course of my ten days fourteen sermons; attended nine prayer meetings, at four of which I gave exhortations; three class meetings, and a lovefeast. Seven of the sermons in Torquay —two on board ship; and I have reason to hope my labour was not in vain in the Lord. Whilst preaching from 'Where sin abounded,' &c., my sister E. was made unspeakably happy in the realization of the blessing of sanctification. Met a class consisting chiefly of young persons lately brought in, and oh! how my soul delighted to hear the clear and scriptural accounts which nearly all of them gave of receiving pardon.

"In the evening I met the society, to whom I gave some account of my own experience during the last year, and pressed them to seek that perfect love, a measure of which God had bestowed on me. You recollect my mother wrote me and said fifteen of the family were members of society. That day two others joined and found peace with God.

"A young lady, a Miss S——, received sanctification in a remarkable manner. A friend had read a letter she had had on the subject. Miss S—— was a

pious female in the established church; but had attended our public means when they did not interfere with her own. On the Sabbath above alluded to, she had received the sacrament at the Chapel-of-Ease in the town, and appeared to be seeking the blessing. The texts referred to in the letter were powerfully impressed on her mind:—'I will, be thou clean'; and 'Now ye are clean,' &c.; still she did not fully believe so as to realize what she desired. In the evening she came to our chapel and remained with the society after preaching: the following morning, whilst at prayer with her children (for she was a governess,) she was led to see more of force, and beauty, and connexion in the passages referred to, and thought she could claim the blessing. But it was not until the evening at preaching that she received such a fulness of the divine influence as removed every doubt. Her heart seemed filled to overflowing. I shall not soon forget her look and manner. When coming out she grasped my hand, and said, 'Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.' She begged two or three female friends afterwards to go to her mother's that night and have a Prayer Meeting, which they continued until eleven o'clock. She was so carried beyond herself in earnestness, power, &c., that her mother was alarmed for her, thought her beside herself, and begged her to desist: her only reply to such an interference was, 'Lord, convince my dear mother of her sinful state! O convert my mother!' &c. She prayed fervently, too, that the blessing of sanctification might be preached and enjoyed at Torquay.

"On Wednesday I drank tea with her, and the young lady who had shewed her the letter mentioned before, with two others who were seeking sanctification. I need not tell you the topic of our conversation. Whilst some remarks were being made on a text you have heard preached from, (2 Cor. iii., 18,) as illustrating the exercise and transforming influence of faith, she appeared quite overcome, and exclaimed, 'Oh! Mr. H——, here are three justified persons seeking sanctification; why may they not obtain *now? Do*, Sir, pray for them *now*. We fell on our knees; she was in an ecstacy, and begged all our neighbours might be called in.

"At the Prayer Meeting the evening after, she was again present, and prayed with much fervour, particularly for the clergyman at the place she had been accustomed to attend, that he might be led to believe, understand and preach christian perfection; and that he might not be hurt by her joining this dear people.

"We had that night a gracious outpouring of the Spirit. It was the time of our visitation. Very many found pardon and holiness. It was with difficulty I could get the people away, and after all they met elsewhere till twelve o'clock. It was one of the most remarkable meetings I ever witnessed in Devon. Never has Torquay seemed so dear as since that visit. But those who have received sanctification have been much discouraged by some sceptical professors. Lukewarm themselves, they would wish to make others so too. They say sanctification cannot be instantaneous; and consequently those who imagined themselves possessed of it must be deceived."

"October 6.—What abundant cause for gratitude to God. How many gracious visitations have I been favoured with lately; but oh! how many are my deficiencies. Am I holier than I was three years ago? What attainments have I made? I have had many gracious lifts Zionwards—many favourable gales of the Spirit; but how much nearer am I to heaven after all? What real progress have I made? Alas! how little. My God, have mercy upon me: help me to be more faithful the coming quarter.

"15.—Felt much enlargement of soul this evening, especially whilst applying my subject to believers seeking sanctification, and urging them to believe for a present and full salvation; to fly on the wings of faith and prayer, and breathe in the blest region of perfect holiness the clearer air of love divine.

"22.—Preached last week three times at five in the morning, and we had prayer meetings the alternate days. To-night at Finstock I read the rules of the society, and urged diligence at class meetings: recommended an hour to be set apart every Friday for self-examination, humiliation, and prayer, advising them to secure from five to six in the morning as particularly favourable, and as it would not interfere with secular concerns.

One poor woman afterwards told me that when I spoke of devoting an hour every Friday for prayer, she said within herself, 'How can I? it is my heaviest day; and I began to think it is easy enough for Mr. HENLEY to talk, but he does not know other people's circumstances; but when you mentioned *the hour*, I was beaten out of all my objections.'

"29.—Sabbath. Preached out of doors. Several of our friends opposed it, but my resolution was fixed, despite of all remonstrance. Whilst praying the first time, an abandoned fellow came up and tried to divert the people from attending. I took no notice of him, but prayed aloud for him—'O Lord have mercy on that wicked sinner, who is trying to disturb those engaged in thy service: he is on the road to perdition, and if he die in his present state, he will burn in the flames of hell for ever. O God, make him tremble for his sins before it be too late.' He turned and walked quietly away like a culprit. May the Lord have mercy upon him.

"NOVEMBER 5. Attended morning prayer meeting at Witney.—Preached at half-past ten.

"After dinner went into the Sabbath School and taught a class of girls.

"Preached at half-past two: then gave an address to the scholars from 'Feed my lambs.'

"At five out of doors in Corn Street—'And he trembling and astonished,' &c.

"At six in the chapel—'Man dieth and wasteth away.' —Met the society. My soul was much in my work.

"12.—At Freeland greatly blessed, and so I believe were many. One backslider cried aloud for mercy, and was enabled again to believe on the Redeemer.

"15.—Went to N——ly, and visited from house to house with tracts, and procured a place to preach in. Oh! the ignorance that prevails.

"29.—Went to Minster—a village destitute of the gospel, from house to house with tracts, and enquiring for a place to preach in; but they all began to make excuse, and it was with much difficulty I succeeded in getting liberty to speak to the people in any way and then partly by guile. I had gone round the village almost, and every body seemed frightened at the thought of having preaching in their houses, when I

asked a woman if she could read; she said, 'No.' 'What, can no one in your large family read?' 'No.' 'O dear, what a pity. Could you not get one of your neighbours to read to you?' They thought not; supposed no one would take the trouble. I enquired if they would object to my reading the scriptures to them for half an hour that night? They said they should be very glad. 'And, perhaps, you would have no objection to invite in a few of your neighbours.' 'No, certainly not.' 'Well, fix your time and I will come: I shall tell the people as I am giving out my tracts; and you must expect me to make some remarks on what I read; and pray with you.' Very well, they would be ready at seven. In a somewhat similar way I obtained leave to meet some of the neighbours in another house at six; and, having invited the people, I had a great many at both places. At six, commenced by reading Matthew v., and then praying for the blessing of God on what we read, and light to understand, I made some remarks on the first verses of the chapter, to which they were very attentive, and the greater part went to the other house where I had appointed to be at seven. Here were others waiting. Read John iii., and explained it to them. At the close I got them to allow me to publish for Mr. Cooke that day fortnight. May the Lord open a door in that place which no man shall be able to shut! Returned home much fatigued.

"30.—At H.——, Went with tracts from house to house, and invited the people to preaching; but with little success. Felt very ill.

"DECEMBER 3.—Still very poorly. My back extremely weak. In the morning felt less liberty than for a great while, perhaps partly owing to debility. Afternoon, more freedom. Evening, had as much freedom of expression, clearness of thought, and energy as ever I had, I think, in my life; even more than ever before.

"8.—I had the advice of a surgeon in consequence of the great pain and weakness in my back: his opinion is that preaching does not occasion it.

"Took tea at ——. Conversation on faith—its nature, and exercise: also on revivals. Mr. —— fears a glorious revival. I wish his fear may be well ground-

ed as to the fact itself, but not as to the evil which, he thinks, generally accompanies it. He said revivals usually left the cause in a worse state than they found it. If so, the fault is not in revivals but in professors; sometimes, perhaps, want of prudence in the instrument; but, frequently, from opposition on the part of those who, from a professed regard to propriety and natural or habitual stoicism, are averse to lively meetings and sudden conversions, and who, instead of encouraging the work and striving to hold fast the good done, by taking the new converts by the hand, rather discourage them by doubts and suspicions with respect to the genuineness of the work: thus they quench the spirit and damp the zeal of the active. The result is, new converts are neglected; prayer meetings are not attended to; and then those persons who, by their conduct and suspicion, have been the means of this falling off, have cried out, 'See how few of these stand.' Notwithstanding this general cry of revivals being followed by a falling away, the proportion of such is not so great as many fancy. Calculations have been made between the Devon and Cornish circuits; in the former there have been more backsliders according to the numbers than in the latter, so noted for revivals, and where it has been said the subsequent declensions are proverbial. Our duty, I think, is to pray for an outpouring of the Spirit, and not dictate to the Lord how it should come; but let Him work as seemeth Him good. I see there is danger. Some are too apt to judge the fervour of devotion to consist in much noise and excitement. Lord, teach me by thy Holy Spirit! Save me from error on either hand!

"9.—Very ill. Met class and gave Tickets. The Lord was present.

"10.—Supped at ——. Exceedingly depressed; grieved at evil speaking; tried to check it, but was unsuccessful: rose from my seat, and said I would leave immediately. Persuaded them to sing, pray, and separate.

"24.—A farewell sermon at S——, on giving up the place. 'The word preached did not profit.'

"31.—Watchnight. Preached from 'The great day of His wrath is come.' Brother R. E. succeeded, and gave

an excellent exhortation. A solemn season and good. The year gone has to me been a year of *many* mercies. I have seen more prosperity in the work of God in general, and more fruit of my own feeble labours, than in any preceding year. The Lord hath dealt bountifully with me. Praise His holy name. Praise the Lord O my soul! Amen."

"Witney, January 1st, 1827.

"MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—Some weeks ago I wrote letters to you and several friends at Torquay, and knew not but the person by whom I sent them had gone until this week. This will, I hope, silence the hard thoughts you have doubtless had against me. You see it is not neglect.

Praise God, I am well and happy in my work; having no doubt but I am where Divine Providence designed. Of this, God has been pleased to give me some pleasing evidence in the revival of His work amongst us. When we came, there was but little life and zeal. Class and prayer meetings badly attended. I resolved to visit all absentees as far as possible. We have now a gratifying change. At our prayer meetings formerly, we could scarcely get any to pray. Now we have eight or ten to engage. We have preaching or prayer meetings in most of the places at five o'clock in the morning, and they are well attended. Several awakenings have taken place; many backsliders are reclaimed; and among the people generally there is a stirring up to 'take hold of God.' Congregations much improved in number and attention. A party that separated from the society a few years ago and joined the Ranters, and built a chapel, have now come back to us again; so that we have now in Witney two chapels open at the same time, and both well attended. In another part of the town, notoriously depraved, where I preached in the street between services on the Sabbaths before the winter set in, we have now a house open, and regular preaching Sundays and week days with the prospect of good; many are seriously wrought upon, and we are about to form a class there immediately. *To God be all the praise!*

"My preaching so frequently, and urging so incessantly the doctrines of the witness of the Spirit and sanctifi-

cation have been found fault with by some; but I hope these will more generally be the subjects of experience. I have an excellent Superintendent, from whom I trust to get much good. The people in general are exceedingly kind. I have been very far from well, but am recovered, and I think was never better in health than I am to-day, though I preached yesterday four times, besides addressing the Sunday Scholars, and assisting at the Watch-night. I cannot fancy I am ever the worse for preaching. My soul is happy in God. Yesterday was a day of fat things. I believe the power of the Lord was present to wound and to heal. I pray for Torquay friends almost as often as I do for myself. Never was it so dear to me as since my last visit. I hope I have been the better for it. Does the work still deepen and widen? Are the young members all stedfast? I hope none will suffer loss for want of looking after. Tell brother —— he must take care what he says to young converts; some have been discouraged by his scepticism; he might as well try to prove that conversion is not instantaneous, as sanctification. He asks, 'Is the ear formed in an instant?' and I would ask, 'Is the blade formed in an instant?' My confidence in the ability of Christ to save, instantly and fully, is constantly increasing. I thank God, I now feel He saves to the utmost.

"For your kindness I feel grateful. Great are my obligations to my dear parents. God bless you all. Pray for your affectionate "J. H."

"JANUARY 7, 1827.—Sermon to the young—'Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth.' I humbly hope good was done. Renewed my covenant with God. O to be entirely His!

"On attending to this service in one place, I observed that those who did not stand up to profess to covenant with God, must of course belong to the prince of darkness. A very wicked man in the town had been told of this by one who was present; and among other things he said he would prevent the Methodists from building a chapel (on a spot of ground which they had bought for the purpose) for at least two years to come. But God said to him, 'Thou fool, this night

shall thy soul be required of thee.' He was found dead a few hours after he went to bed!"

Incidents like the above have been of by no means unfrequent occurrence in the history of the church; and while the devout christian will observe them with humble awe, and acknowledge that "God is known by the judgment which He executeth;" others may, perhaps, be disposed to deny the connexion between the sinner's conduct and his fate, and to regard the attempt to trace it as the result of enthusiasm or of party prejudice. A few remarks upon the subject may, therefore, be not inappropriate. The great work of God is the salvation of man's soul. To further this object, the dispensation of grace is directed, and the kingdom of Providence is overruled. For this Jesus died, the Spirit has been poured out, the way of life revealed, the gospel preached, the ministry commissioned, and the church instituted. Whenever individuals or a community labour for this object, they are workers together with God, and may expect that He will work with them and crown their instrumentality with signs following. If they become indifferent to this work, whether they be ministers or churches, no matter what they pursue instead of it, God will assuredly forsake them. But woe to him who *opposes* it. Not only is he a foe to the best interests of his race, but he assumes the position of direct hostility to God. He labours to thwart His gracious designs, and to defeat the benevolent intention for which the Saviour shed his blood: he does despite to the Spirit of grace, and openly sides with the adversary of souls. Such incur no common guilt, and awful will be their condition when God "maketh inquisition for blood." It was the crowning sin of the Pharisees of old that "those who were entering into the kingdom of Heaven they hindered." Let the persecutor read and tremble. The most insignificant individual, the humblest community, the feeblest instrumentality which is employed simply and sincerely in the work of saving souls from death, becomes an agent in the fulfilment of Heaven's high purposes, and is under God's peculiar care and benediction. If, under whatever pretext, he refuses to labour with them, or to wish them good luck in the

name of the Lord, still let him be very jealous of hindering or opposing them. The advice of Gamaliel in such cases is seasonable and appropriate:—"Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this work or this counsel be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." Nor can it be stigmatized as irrational or enthusiastic, if when a Pharaoh or a Herod is suddenly arrested in his course of opposition to that which is the great design of God, both in providence and grace, the christian reverently recognises His hand and acknowledges—"Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

Our excellent friend pursued his sacred work at this time with remarkable energy and zeal. He regularly visited the several houses in the villages where he preached, going from house to house, distributing tracts, conversing with the inmates on divine things, inviting them to attend the means of grace, and frequently reading and praying with them. Other places in the neighbourhood, where there was no regular preaching, he visited as often as opportunity permitted, and either obtained a room, or preached out of doors; and he would frequently diverge from the road when on his way to his place of appointment, visit and preach at some hamlet, and then proceed to his proper sphere of labour.

His efforts on theSabbath were extraordinary. Oftentimes he would preach four, five, six, and even seven times in one day, besides walking many miles, and holding prayer meetings and other services. How his time and strength were equal to so many and such laborious engagements, was a matter of universal surprise; but they were accomplished, and that not for a short season, or at occasional intervals, but constantly and uniformly during the whole period of his residence in that circuit.

The following letters will illustrate at once the state of his mind at this period, and the nature and progress of the work in which he was engaged.

"Witney, January 9, 1827.

"To Rev. John Smith.

"My dear Brother,—I have delayed writing so long that I am now ashamed; but I would throw myself

on your mercy, and hope you will not requite me as I deserve.

"I think often of you in my best moments, and in my heaviest seasons too, for these, alas! I too often have. Your example stimulates me to renew my vigour. I am striving to serve God with my spirit in the gospel, and I have to be thankful for some pleasing evidence, external as well as internal, that I have not wrought in vain. When we came here we did not find that life among the people we had hoped. There was union but no activity. They were 'united together,' but not 'striving together.' But we have a pleasing change. Many old members have sought and found the 'pearl of great price.' We have had awakenings, and some conversions. My Superintendent is exceedingly kind: he is an excellent man, much respected, very active, and anxious to forward everything that is likely to promote the welfare of Zion. Perhaps few men exceed him in carrying his measures so completely, yet easily; he rules, but nobody feels it. The circuit is a very comfortable one. We each sleep out about twelve nights a month. Our most distant place is only seven miles. We have opened three new places, and have plenty of room to work out on the right hand and on the left; but at present we are fully occupied, preaching every night in the week excepting Saturdays and one Friday in the month; meeting the young people and children every Saturday.

"My heart, I trust, is in my work, and my aim in all my labours is to save souls. Still I feel conscious that I am very deficient. It seems to me sometimes as though I were doing nothing, but hanging like a dead weight on the ark, instead of helping it forward. At others I am tempted to think too highly of myself, as though the prosperity of the work depended upon me. But I hope I can say I have not yielded to the temptation. After such thoughts and reasonings, Satan thrusts sore at me, and tries to persuade me I have lost my confidence, and that it would be hypocrisy to profess otherwise. But through grace I trust I have overcome hitherto, and God has been pleased on these occasions to give me more clearly the witness of sanctification. At present I can and do testify, to the

praise and glory of His grace, 'The blood of Christ cleanseth me from all sin.' I hope to get into a more excellent way, to be more frequent and fervent in closet devotions. Consciousness of neglect on this point has of late pained me much; and I doubt not that if I had attended to this important duty better, I should have been more useful than I have been and more holy than I am. Pray for me that I may be more faithful to my personal duties. Though I am defective in public duties, yet it is in private that I more sensibly feel my danger of coming short. Write me soon; and believe me your affectionate brother,

"JOHN HENLEY."

"January 25, 1827.

"Rev. Joseph Earnshaw.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—You have no doubt heard from my friends that I am very comfortably situated in everything of a temporal nature, and I bless God I have witnessed a very pleasing change in the state of spiritual affairs.

"I have reason to hope that by visiting the classes and the absent members at their houses, going from house to house conversing with them, and in public and private urging the necessity of making *sure work for heaven*, we have been, under God, the means of stirring up the people.

"Our five o'clock morning meetings have been glorious. We have had many gracious visitations. Backsliders have been reclaimed, and many awakened. But much questioning and doubting has arisen as to the propriety of my preaching so prominently the doctrines of 'the witness of the Spirit' and 'sanctification.' Some have blamed me, and designated it 'the enthusiasm of the young man'—'the ranterism of the revivalist.' These, though not many, yet leading characters, have occasioned much talk. I have been called upon to defend myself, or rather *the doctrines*, publicly and privately. It had arrived at such lengths, particularly through one individual, a local preacher, that I felt it my duty to mention it at our last Local Preachers' Meeting; and the clear and decided manner in which Mr. Cooke, my excellent Superintendent, stated what was Methodism, fully justified me and

silenced others. I see it more than ever my duty to make these doctrines prominent. A full, and present, and conscious salvation by faith, I hope to preach more than ever. The opposition these doctrines meet with is frequently overruled for good; so in some measure it has been with us. It has become the topic of conversation; and whilst a few have questioned and opposed, many have been led to serious self-examination; and by far the greater number are inquiring and seeking, and others believing and rejoicing in the attainment and possession of these richly promised blessings. We hope to see the number increase. My hopes are sanguine. God grant we may realize such an outpouring of the Spirit in all its richer energy, that '*the people may be all righteous.*' It is fit I should say something of my own experience; but I can say nothing very encouraging. I fear I have been comparatively a loiterer. I have been frequently the subject of temptation; but still, on the whole, I have much cause for thankfulness. I hold fast my confidence, and am still a witness that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' God has greatly blessed me in my public ministrations and in meeting the societies and visiting. But these public duties, and the necessary studies preparatory for the pulpit, have left me, I fear, too little time for private prayer. Oh! how seldom have I spent two hours a day on my knees in private. I sensibly feel that in order to get into '*the more excellent way*,' I must husband my time better; and I hope by diligence and method to secure more time for the important exercise of private devotion.

"I have less travelling than in my last circuit, as the journeys are shorter; but have more mental labour, as I preach a good deal in the town. This drives me to my study, and I thank God that notwithstanding my weakness, he has hitherto given me favour in the sight of the people and some fruit to encourage me. Whilst the nature of my work requires much study, I feel thankful that I am much more favourably situated for it than in my last circuit. I often suffer from contending feelings, between the inclination to study and the duty of visiting the people. At other times when I am visiting, I am in danger of employing too much

time in that way. What proportion, think you, should the one bear to the other? I hope to hear soon, and you will please to give me your advice on this question, and your opinion of fasting. Ought we not to exhort the people to this duty? Lately, too, I have thought much on the preparation of Sunday dinners. Is it not Sabbath-breaking to keep servants from the house of God to dress dinners? Is it not a partaking in their sins to sit and join in a repast so provided? This has hitherto been my practice once a month regularly in this circuit. What would you advise? and how do you act in similar cases? I have asked you so many questions that I am almost ashamed to put any more. But allow me this one—Have you obtained full salvation? If not, what hinders? Have any more realized it in the circuit? Do those who have professed to have obtained hold fast, and give evidence of its genuineness? Does the work continue to widen and deepen among you? My brother tells me he hopes it is going on gradually. Praise God. My love to all my friends, and all who love God. Believe me, your sincere friend and brother, "JOHN HENLEY."

The fond affection which Mr. H. cherished for the place of his birth, and to which he frequently gave expression both in his letters and his journal, had been greatly strengthened during his last visit, in consequence of that gracious revival of the work of God to which repeated reference has been already made. Respecting this he was extremely anxious lest anything might arise to arrest its progress or limit its influence. A mistaken idea is entertained by many, that a time of extraordinary prosperity in the church is always succeeded by a season of languor and barrenness; and unhappily to entertain this opinion is frequently found to be one effectual means of verifying it. This error Mr. H. judiciously combats in the following letter:—

"Witney, February, 1827.

"To Mr. Richard Henley.

"MY DEAR BROTHER RICHARD,—I believe I have received two letters from you since I wrote. This is unusual, but I assure you it has not been owing to idleness, for I have been fully employed. Neither has it

been want of interest in your welfare, nor forgetfulness of you and Torquay. I rejoice to hear the work is still going on amongst you. The way to promote this, is by each one's holding fast all the good he receives. Let all the members look to themselves, that they lose not the things which have been wrought, and then there will be no cessation of prosperity. Many people are tempted, and there is great danger of thinking, that after a tide of gracious influence, it must necessarily be followed by an ebbing. Should this, which appears plausible, be yielded to, bad effects will soon follow and the Spirit of God be grieved. The flowing of divine influences in an individual heart, in the church, or in the world, should not be looked at as the flowing and ebbing sea; but as the perpetual springing up of the fountain, and the increasing flow of the river,

> 'Which runs, and as it runs,
> For ever shall run on.'

Nor as the rising and the setting sun, but as a light whose increasing lustre 'shineth *more and more* unto the perfect day.' I hope the friends at Torquay will not give way to such notions as that a revival must be followed by a falling away; or they may suffer loss and lose strength in prayer, and so their fears will lead to expectation, and the result will be certain.

"With regard to your own experience, I am not at all surprised that you have had these doubts and scruples. The little things you refer to, prove at least a tender conscience. Those feelings are to be traced frequently, either to the strivings of the Spirit to bring you into a more excellent way, or the accusations of the enemy, who still maintains his character of 'the accuser of the brethren,' with an intention of robbing you of your confidence and bringing you into condemnation. When these feelings come from either quarter, your safety depends on immediate recourse to a throne of grace, and momentarily 'reckoning yourself dead indeed unto sin.' Endeavour to ascertain from which of these sources they flow. If from the first, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God; yield to the teaching and drawing of the Spirit; but do not cast away your confidence, for, judging from personal ex-

perience, as well as from the experience of others with whom I have conversed, and of whom I have read, I consider that the strivings of the Spirit, with the desires of our own hearts to walk in a more excellent way, may produce a painful sense of omissions and deficiencies and humiliating views, and yet not imply actual sin, nor be inconsistent with freedom from sin, or a state of sanctification. And if from the second, (the accusation of the enemy,) take great care of dwelling too much on the thoughts he suggests, and poring over the evils which it is your interest to avoid, lest, like the squirrel which looks at the snake until, overcome by terror, he falls into his mouth, so you, by poring over the temptation of the enemy and the charges he brings against you, give up your confidence, and wholly fall into the condemnation. The best way to avoid this danger, is to divert your attention from sin and Satan to Christ and holiness; and instead of dwelling on the temptation, contemplate the promises—claim their fulfilment momentarily. Yet, if in any case you bring condemnation on yourself and lose the blessing, do not endeavour to persuade yourself you have not, but go as at first, acknowledge it to God, and claim by faith the promised blessing. But here, you will say, is the difficulty, to distinguish between the state of mind produced by temptation only, and a real forfeiture of the blessing. This I acknowledge, but prayer will set all right. I have frequently broken the snare in this way. O Lord, if I have sinned, I am willing to acknowledge it, and am, indeed, sorry for it. If I have, I come now and cast myself again on thy mercy; and now, O Lord, I know thou canst and thou wilt deliver me. I come to thee. I reckon myself 'dead indeed unto sin,' &c.

"Praise the Lord, He is with us in this circuit, and is reviving His work. We have no noise—no cryings out—no late meetings; but we see a steady ingathering, and prayer meetings are frequent in private houses, &c. We see sinners converted and souls saved. I think we have added nearly fifty members since Conference. We have six new places on the plan, and other openings present themselves.

"Our people talk of inviting us both to stay another year, and trying for a third preacher. Around us are

many neglected towns and villages; a large tract of country unblest by gospel preaching. There remaineth much land to be possessed; and we can hardly adopt the language of Caleb, and say, 'Let us go, for we are well able.' Yet we are making some efforts towards it; and we hope, as the season approaches that is favourable to out-door preaching, to enlarge our borders. My Superintendent is an excellent and laborious man. Our local preachers are generally disposed to do all they can; and God hath promised to be with us. We are aiming at, and expecting great things, aud surely we cannot expect too much, since God is on our side. Yours affectionately, "J. H."

Mr. HENLEY'S zealous and untiring labours in his circuit were often accompanied by signs of the Divine presence and approval. The following letters will be read with interest, as affording proof that he did not "run in vain neither labour in vain."

"Witney, March 6, 1827.

"To Mr. William Henley.

"MY DEAR BROTHER WILLIAM,—I believe I am a letter in your debt, and as I am about to send, I take this opportunity of writing you.

"Our prospects here are brightening. We have good done almost every week. We have an increase in our number. Attendance good at all our meetings, and more life among us. We have prayer meetings on a Sunday night at eight o'clock, in six different places and different parts of the town; four or five also in private houses in the week, and in the both chapels too. Also two five o'clock morning meetings in the week. Many new classes have been formed, without taking any members from the old ones; and I hope there is an increase of real religion connected with all this. It is, perhaps, well for me that amid all this encouragement, &c., I have to suffer reproach. To be spoken evil of, is ballast intended no doubt to be proportioned to the sail—to prevent being upset. I hope to be humble. To God be the praise. I do not mean to intimate that I only have been employed instrumentally—far from this. Many have been the honoured instruments, and I have to bless God that amongst them I bear an humble part.

"FRIDAY MORNING.—Quarter past six o'clock. Am just returned from prayer meeting, where we have had a gracious quickening. The people are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and they shall be filled, for God hath spoken the word. I have severe conflicts with the enemy on the subject of my own experience, and nothing seems to succeed on these occasions but prayer. Prayer sets all right, and I praise God I am enabled still to reckon myself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

"There is nothing singular in the doubts and scruples of some of the Torquay friends about the possibility of instantaneous sanctification and the genuineness of the work in those who profess to have received it. It has been so almost from the beginning. This doctrine has been opposed here, from much more respectable and formidable quarters than it was in T——. Many who condemned the Ranter are one after another falling into the same kind of Ranterism. If instantaneous sanctification be impossible, on what principle is the salvation of the thief upon the cross accounted for? 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.'"

"Witney, March 7, 1827.

"To the Rev. ——.

"Though I have neglected to write, I have not forgotten to pray for, nor ceased to love my dear brother ——. And sometimes, while ruminating on the little time we spent together, feel the recollection to be sweet and profitable, and please myself with the idea that I have a place in your memory and an interest in your prayers. I hoped to have seen you at B——, and to have congratulated you and Mrs. —— on your union. It is now rather out of date; but as it is my first communication since your entrance into the land of Beulah, I sincerely pray, 'May the Lord bless you with all the happiness peculiar to the state on which you have entered.' Young people have frequently very exalted notions of that state of bliss. As to myself, I am quite at sea—out of sight of any port (but that of heaven); and since our sailing orders forbid casting anchor until a certain period, I am not over anxious for any sight of land, unless the time for keeping at sea were nearly expired. My present intention is to keep free. I have

sufficient to occupy all my attention and time. We are enlarging our borders and increasing our work in this circuit. I see there is no room for loitering, whilst there are many villages, and towns and indeed whole neighbourooods, unblest with gospel preaching; souls perishing for lack of knowledge. God has by His providence in several instances favoured our attempts to introduce His word into some of these places; and by His Spirit we have reason to hope into some hearts also. And though there is here and there the voice of unbelief, from those who, like the spies of old, say, 'We be not able,' &c., this is not the general voice. The language of our Local Preachers and leading men generally is, 'There remaineth very much land to be possessed. Let us go up for we are well able.' Our prospects brightens, and our hopes are sanguine; and what shall withstand when God is on our side? And we *have* evidence that the Lord *is* amongst us. We see sinners awakened—persecutors turned—profligates reclaimed—penitents pardoned—believers quickened and sanctified—the lukewarm stirred up, and backsliders healed; and though we do not see this so universally as we wish, yet we do see some instances of every kind, particularly in the circuit town. Our five o'clock morning prayer meetings have been made a blessing. When this was first proposed it was completely laughed at, and I was told I might get a few for a meeting or two, but very soon I should find myself alone. However, they have in general been regularly and well attended twice a week, all through the winter, in the severest weather. A poor woman who has come constantly a mile and a half, went on Friday last to call a neighbour who had once or twice accompanied her. The person made excuse, 'It was too cold.' The other replied, 'Oh! if we get into hell we shall find it too hot, and I will rather face the cold than the heat.' We have added about fifty since Conference. Amid these encouragements I have had my mind painfully exercised not only with inward conflicts with the enemy, but from without, having suffered reproach for the cause of Christ. Having preached frequently and prominently the doctrines of assurance and sanctification, and professing to enjoy freedom from sin, I have been made a

mark to shoot at. However, it has, I hope, had a sanctified effect, keeping me on my guard against every thing that would be likely to injure the cause of holiness; and by humbling me, it has been like ballast to prevent my being upset. Through mercy I retain the witness that my ways please God. I reckon myself dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God; and I still feel resolved to preach frequently and prominently these doctrines.

"I long to know and to make known 'the heights and depths of love divine.' And though opposition be encountered, this will be overruled for good. Whilst some are doubting and disputing, others believe and realize, and become 'living epistles, known and read of all men.' Such has been the fact here. My mind has been tried about fasting. Are we not as a body, preachers as well as people, culpably negligent on this head? Did not the primitive Methodists, especially the eminently pious and useful among them, '*fast often*' and recommend it? Ought we not to enforce it by practice, as well as by precept, as a mean of grace and rule of Methodism? And if Matt. vi., 6, enjoin and sanction prayer, does not Matt. vi., 17, 18, equally so fasting? I trust the voice of complaint from the different parts of your circuit is changed for the voice of rejoicing;—that instead of 'O my leanness, my leanness!' they are shouting in gratitude the praise of God for prosperity in Zion.

"I feel particularly interested in B. My kind regards to all my friends. Yours affectionately."

In the early part of this year, Mr. HENLEY visited several places where there had before been no Methodist preaching. In some of these he encountered much opposition; but notwithstanding this, the word of the Lord had free course, and was glorified. To both of these he refers in the following extracts from his journal.

"APRIL 6.—This afternoon I went, accompanied by some friends, to B——, and preached in the centre of the town. Then proceeded to A——, and addressed a large and attentive congregation in the open air. The people after the service offered us a house for preaching. In both these places there is every prospect of great good.

"Easter Monday. Went to Ducklington, a place notorious for opposition to religion. Some friends from Witney accompanied me; and as the people were returning from church, I preached without any attempt at molestation. Several seemed to feel the force of truth, and evidenced it by tears. They earnestly requested us to come again, and engaged to provide us a house to preach in.

"MAY 17.—Went, accompanied by several friends, to Barrington. On our way we stopped at a village to tell the people that we were going to preach at the next place, but they flocked around us in such numbers that I addressed them immediately, inviting them to come to the Saviour, and they listened with great attention. We then proceeded to the next village, where I was assisted in solemnly warning them from Job xxxvi., 18. Several followed us to the place of evening preaching, three miles distant, and three joined the Society.

"18.—Went to Long Handborough, with the intention of preaching. We fixed on a green spot, and commenced the service by singing and prayer, the people gradually flocking together. Some persons, however, desirous to disturb us, set the bells ringing; and a party of young men employed for the purpose came up to interrupt the service by making the most hideous noises. I entreated them to desist, but in vain; they were determined to prevent my preaching. I begged to be permitted to make an apology, saying I would then conclude the service and leave them. To this they agreed, and were silent for some little time. I told them my motive for coming, what I purposed taking for my text, and some part of my sermon; saying, if they had allowed me, I should have said so and so. But this did not last long; they were soon worse than ever, pelting us with eggs, stones, and whatever they could find. No entreaty or remonstrance would avail. I warned them that they would have to give account to God for this proceeding, and reminded them of the uncertainty of life. I added, 'Perhaps some of you may be called to your account before this day fortnight. Oh, "Prepare to meet your God!"' One young man, who had particularly distinguished himself in disturbing us,

replied to me, saying, 'He should not give his account so soon.' Awful to relate, within ten days after, while bathing in the river he was seized with cramp, and though several persons were standing by, and he might to all appearance have been saved, no one made an effort to rescue him, and he was drowned."

Another circumstance in connexion with the shocking event above mentioned, deserves to be recorded. On this very day fortnight Mr. H. was again preaching at the same village, and on the same spot which he had before occupied, and during the service the funeral of the unhappy young man passed by, and his remains were committed to their earthly resting place. Mr. HENLEY afterwards endeavoured to improve the awful event by preaching from "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh;" and there was reason to believe that lasting good was the result.

The opposition encountered at this period in some parts of the circuit was so violent, that it was deemed necessary to have recourse to legal measures in order to obtain protection and redress. The case was ultimately tried at the Quarter Sessions at Oxford, and a favourable verdict was obtained, in consequence of which no further disturbance of a public kind took place. In the management of this business Mr. HENLEY took a very active part, and the tact and judgment which he displayed were the subject of general admiration. Indeed, the facility with which he could enter into, and be actively concerned about a variety of matters foreign to those strictly spiritual pursuits which appeared to engage all his energies, was not the least remarkable feature in his character. Not only was he the diligent student, the acute theologian, the laborious preacher, the zealous pastor, and the indefatigable promoter of prayer meetings and other similar means of grace; but he would take the kindest interest in the arrangement and success of the different Sunday Schools; attend the meetings of the choirs, and advise and encourage them; nor was there a department of labour, either more or less remotely connected with the church, in which he was not a willing helper. His was not cold and uninterested approval, but zealous affectionate co-operation. The people felt

he was always not only one *with* them, but one *of* them; and that to invite Mr. HENLEY's help was to receive an efficient and hearty fellow labourer. Can it then be wondered at that he was generally and warmly beloved? During his abode in the Dunster Circuit, he had taken great interest in the establishment of a Benefit Society, which was then set on foot for the purpose of preventing the evils so commonly connected with institutions of that nature, and of securing to the lower classes that provision in sickness and old age which they promise, but too frequently fail to ensure. In the various arrangements connected with the formation of this Society Mr. H. took an active part; and when he left the circuit he still retained a lively interest in its welfare. The following letter, which refers to this, will also illustrate another excellency in his character—his readiness to turn from secular to serious subjects, and to make earth "a scale to heaven." Often in the midst of an animated conversation on temporal matters his pious friends would be at once startled and delighted by an apt and beautiful allusion to spiritual things, which showed that his heart and treasure were still above. Like some bird of lofty wing, his soul could stoop to earth, but could not settle there.

"Witney, May 31, 1827.

"To Mr. H.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Yours, though short, was truly gratifying in that it informed me of the success of your new 'Benefit Society.' It will no doubt be productive of much and real good. Its influence will be favourable to piety; consequently its advantages will be realized where sickness never enters and old age never comes.

"Oh! how does every thing magnify in importance that is seen to bear on our eternal interests. And how solemn the consideration that every act of our lives, however trivial it may seem to be considered by itself, is a seed sown for futurity, and will have its influence on our eternal destiny.

"My brother, act in reference to eternity. Live for eternity, by making every engagement, however secular in its nature, become a religious act. As much as possible, make every meeting a class meeting, every day a Sabbath, and every meal a sacrament.

"I am pleased to hear from my friend Mr. Symons, that you are doing well at Williton. May the Lord make you to abound more and more in numbers and in piety! I do assure you I frequently bear you on the arms of prayer, and I feel much interested in the welfare of your class. Give my love to them all when you next meet them. Tell them that I hope they are keeping their lamps trimmed and burning bright, and are pressing towards the mark for the prize of our high calling. Ever remind them, my brother, that religion is a progressive thing;—that there should always be a growing in grace—a sinking into God, and a rising higher and higher still 'in salvation and the climes of bliss.' Never lose sight of those distinguishing stages in christian experience, which we, as a body of people, have from the first contended for—justification and entire sanctification. Direct them to make clear the way to the latter, by assuring themselves of the former. Urge all to seek the abiding witness of the Spirit. Frequently enquire if they *now* enjoy a sense of the favour of God, and exhort them continually to holiness. Point out to them frequently the advantages of perfect love, and thus exhibit it to them as a privilege to be desired. 'A *present* and *full* salvation by *faith—to be had now*,' cannot be too frequently dwelt upon by preachers and class leaders. You will not disdain these hints, coming from one who earnestly prays for the spiritual welfare of yourself and class. I think I know you too well to make an apology necessary.

"I hope you are also employing your talents as a local preacher. May God make you successful in winning souls to Christ! I desire to bless God He has not sent me here to labour in vain. He graciously visits us and revives His work. At the last Quarterly Meeting we found an increase to our society of a hundred and eleven since Conference, since which meeting I suppose we have admitted forty more. We are adding more or less every week. We have nearly twenty Sunday Scholars earnestly seeking salvation. We have taken eight new preaching places on our plan, and have commenced preaching also in three others since the plan was made. In one of the three they have had three sermons, and those the first Methodist sermons ever

delivered there. Only one place of worship, and in that the pulpit is filled by an ungodly man. There are several already under conviction. Nearly twenty came three miles to our nearest chapel last Sunday, and several of them have joined the society.

"We hope to have a third preacher, if things continue to go on well. The request of our last meeting was unanimously passed at the District. At present, much as I love work, I have rather more than I can get through. But such are the prospects before us, that we cannot refuse to be co-workers with God. The Local Preachers join heartily in the work—preaching frequently out of doors. We have commenced four new Sunday Schools in the circuit, and are taking measures for a fifth. I hope all this is not mere external show. I believe the work is of God. My Superintendent, who is a most judicious man, says he has never seen a revival so unexceptionable, so manifestly a genuine work of God. The number of regular weekly prayer meetings in Witney only, has increased from two to sixteen.

"My soul is engaged in this work, and my whole desire is to spend my life and strength in labouring to bring sinners to God. I still delight to testify that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth me from all sin; and I still labour to be more like my Master.

"Pray for me, and be assured yourself and family, and my valued Dunster friends, shall not be forgotten by their and your sincere friend and brother in Christ."

The labours of Mr. HENLEY and of his revered and faithful colleague, had been graciously owned of God from the commencement of the year. The spiritual state of the societies was greatly improved, and many had been added to them; while the congregations in every part of the circuit were large beyond all precedent. The work, however, had been of a calm and quiet character, unaccompanied by that excitement which sometimes characterises a revival of religion, and occasionally leads to disorder and confusion. Whether this is to be desired or deprecated, is a question upon which there probably exists great diversity of opinion; but it cannot be denied, that though not perhaps a necessary, it has been a common circumstance in every great revival,

and will seldom be found to occur except where good is actually done. That something of the kind began at this time to be witnessed in Witney, the following letter will show:—

"Witney, June, 1827.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—You will doubtless rejoice to hear we are prospering, have added above 150 since Conference, and are breaking up new ground all around us. We had a gracious outpouring of the Spirit on Whit-Monday, at a lovefeast in the country. Above 300 were present. After one and another had spoken with life, readiness, and simplicity for an hour, a female who had come five miles, burdened and distressed, stood up and praised God for deliverance. This increased the distress of many labouring and heavy laden sinners that were present; we sung—

'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,'

on behalf of the woman set at liberty; and I exhorted penitents to look up and expect deliverance, observing that I hoped we should repeat the hymn of praise for many before we left; and soon another and another and another stepped into liberty, and again and again we praised God for his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men. All went on delightfully with order and spirit, until at length, whilst a zealous countryman was engaged in prayer, the feeling was overwhelming, and all attempts to preserve order were useless. Some uttered agonizing cries for mercy, others bursts of rapturous hallelujahs. Soon the persons near those in distress began to pray for them in separate parties; whilst others were still praising God. One lad who had recently joined society, actually roared aloud for mercy; but soon his language was changed —he sprang up suddenly from his knees, clapped his hands, and shouted aloud with all his strength, 'Glory to God, I do believe in Jesus Christ! Glory to God! Hallelujah!' &c.; and continued it until we were obliged to stop him. I do not know exactly how many were clearly set at liberty, perhaps about twelve or thirteen, and one received full salvation; but I believe there was not one present who did not get a lift Zionward. A few were almost frightened toward the

latter part of the meeting. Some of the greatest sticklers for order and decorum were present, and to my surprise they were so pleased at the meeting that they found fault with me for not keeping it on an hour longer. I hope to see many more such meetings. But I am humbled as in the dust before God. Oh! how much shame ought I to take, that I get on so slowly. I sometimes fear I have lost ground, instead of gained, since my last to you; but through mercy, I do hope that my fears are groundless as to the fact, though I am sadly tempted. I see and feel more and more my deficiencies, and frequently painfully feel a sense of unworthiness, which humbles me. The testimony that I love God with all my heart, is sometimes very clear and satisfactory; but at others, doubts and fears prevail. Pray for me, oh! pray for me. Your affectionate friend and brother."

Seasons such as those described in this letter, now occurred very frequently; and the excitement arising from the spectacle of persons in the agony of spiritual distress on account of their sins, and obtaining a sense of the mercy of God through faith in Jesus Christ, gave new energy to his exertions. Far from undervaluing these "producible results" of ministerial labour, as a numerous party in the present day affect to do, he constantly prayed, "Let thy work *appear* unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children;" and when "the hand of the Lord was with him," and a great number believed and turned to the Lord, and "signs and wonders were done by the name of the holy child Jesus," he regarded it as an encouragement to faith and an answer to prayer. Yet the remarkable success with which he was favoured, did not lead to the indulgence of self-complacency; on the contrary, he was humbled under a sense of his unworthiness, and led to seek with redoubled ardour that grace of the Holy Spirit from which alone the most able and zealous ministry can derive efficiency and power. Not that he was free from temptations of this kind. Both his journals and letters at this period refer to the powerful temptations by which he was harassed, and this was one among the rest. It was one, however, which he successfully resisted. His simple and unaf-

fected humility was at all times one of his amiable characteristics, and never was more conspicuous than when he was rendered eminently instrumental of good. He appeared almost unconscious of his own usefulness; seldom spoke of his personal labour or success; and so far from disparaging that of others, he frequently acknowledged and heartily rejoiced in it. He beautifully illustrated the apostolic precept—"Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

The labour of the circuit had increased to such an extent, that it was deemed expedient to apply to the Conference of 1827 to appoint a third minister to it; in consequence of which, the Rev. J. T. Barr was stationed there, along with the Rev. Messrs. Cooke and Henley. The result of the past year was an encouraging increase to the number of members; the opening of several new places, in which numerous congregations and flourishing societies were already formed; and a general and marked improvement in the spiritual condition of the neighbourhood. Thus encouraged and knit together in love, our excellent friend and his colleagues entered upon the arduous engagements of the new year.

CHAP. VI.

"THEREFORE BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED, AND HAVING RECEIVED OF THE FATHER THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST, HE HATH SHED FORTH THIS WHICH YE NOW SEE AND HEAR."—ACTS xxxiii. 2.

Journal—Oxford—Rev. John Smith, of Nottingham—Experience—Remarkable circumstance—Divine guidance the believer's privilege—Letter to his Brother—To the Rev.——.—To a local Preacher, who had left the Society—To the Rev.——.—Journal—Revival—Watchnight—Mr. W——.—Letter to his Brother—To his Mother—Journal—Progress of the Work—The Soldier—The Irish Papist—Letter to Rev. John Smith—Journal—Self-humiliation and renewed covenant—Ordination—Removal from the Circuit—Remarks. 1827—28.

"SPENT one Sabbath at Oxford during Conference, and kept quite above the fear of man. After preaching I related my experience, and bore my testimony to the ability of Christ to save from inbred corruption.

"At the close of harvest the Lord assisted me from 'The harvest is past,' &c., so to deliver my soul that if ever I were faithful it was then. O how I felt for souls! The awful probability that some who heard me were hastening to join the lost was terrific and overwhelming. God enabled me to expostulate with sinners with much power.

"OCTOBER 14.—Assisted in the opening of a new chapel at Chipping Norton. A good day. God was with us: unbelieving hearts were sounded and found wanting, and slumbering consciences were aroused. I lost sight of every thing, and preached for souls. Lord I thank thee for this grace. Help me, O help me, to keep this end always in view! Met with a person who is acquainted with brother John Smith, of Nottingham. It is heart-cheering to hear of that holy man and of the work of God. What power attends his ministry. Have I not the same God? Am I not interested in the same covenant? O for more faith!—more unction! Lord pardon my deficiencies!

"I feel deeply humbled before God on a review of the past. Many have been my temptations, but a throne of grace has been always accessible. Often I have been led to fear I had lost my evidence for sanctification;—that I had sinned grievously in not acknowledging it;—and that the pride of my heart led me still to profess to be dead to sin. But as my confidence has been strengthened and my evidence brightened from time to time when waiting upon God, I have held on my way hitherto. Sometimes, it is true, I have but barely overcome: the enemy of my soul has thrust sore at me. O the closet! there is nothing like this. I am very anxious on account of the work of God. My desires to be useful in saving souls are increasingly intense; but may there not be some pride even in this? Lord, save me from pride.

"NOVEMBER 27.—Since I wrote last, I have had some gracious visitations, and God has given power to the word through the instrumentality of such an unworthy worm as I feel myself to be. To him be all the glory. On Sabbaths at Witney, I have had much assistance and power to plead with sinners.

"DECEMBER 25.—Christmas day. Deeply impressed with the value of souls, and the necessity of zeal, diligence, and effort for their salvation. During the services a hallowed feeling prevailed. One person received the blessing of sanctification.

The following incident, which occurred at this period, may be deemed not unworthy of permanent record. In a village in the neighbourhood of Witney, Mr. H. and his excellent colleague were desirous of introducing Methodist preaching, and they accordingly hired a room for the purpose. The occupants of the adjoining house were unhappily ungodly persons, and determined on doing everything in their power to annoy the people who assembled to worship. One of the rooms which they occupied, being only separated from the place of preaching by a boarded partition, they availed themselves of this for the purpose of interrupting the service, by talking aloud, singing songs, and making other noises. On one occasion they determined on having their infant child christened on the day of the preaching; and a farmer near, who was as much opposed as them-

selves to "this new way," promised them a joint of meat and some beer in order that they might have a merry-making, the boisterous mirth of which they hoped would entirely prevent the service being held. Three days however, before that period, the child suddenly sickened and died; and the time which they intended to spend in disturbing the worship of God, was employed in silent and mournful preparation for the infant's funeral.

The infidel and the ungodly may scoff at occurrences such as these; but the christian may surely be permitted to remark them with reverent awe, and to remember that "God hath also prepared for Him the instruments of death; He ordaineth His arrows against the persecutors."

The opinion expressed in the commencement of the following letter, that it is the privilege of the children of God to be so fully under the divine guidance as never to miss their providential way, was one which Mr. HENLEY very confidently entertained and frequently expressed. In conversing on this subject, he remarked that there was great beauty and propriety in the 2nd verse of the 326th of Wesley's hymns:—

"By Thine unerring Spirit led,
We shall not in the desert stray:
We shall not *full direction need*,
Nor *miss our providential way*;
As far from danger as from fear,
While love, almighty love is near."

The believer, he said, if animated with love to God and aiming at His glory, would have his path so opened up, and his course so graciously controlled, that he would not *need* minute and explicit direction as to every step in life, nor, on the other hand, should he ever miss his providential way. Never does he cry with a submissive spirit, "Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel," but the promise is confirmed to him, "I will direct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go. I *will* guide thee with mine eye."

"Witney, December 22, 1827.

"To Mr. Richard Henley.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am glad to hear of the

opening which presents itself to ——. I hope it is in the way of Providence. May God prosper him in the undertaking. I have been lately reflecting on the advantages connected with following the leadings of Providence, and of ascertaining that we are in '*our providential way*.' This assurance will reconcile us to the trials and difficulties of life, and prevent a thousand anxious thoughts that are as injurious as they are painful. And I believe it to be the privilege of the children of God to be so fully under the divine guidance as never to miss that way. I bless God I have not a doubt but I am in the very place and doing the very work which He would have me. Since I wrote last, my experience has not been so steady and unvaried as before. I have several times lost my confidence, but it has been again restored. I have lately had many gracious quickenings. The work of God goes on in our circuit steadily, but not rapidly. We are gradually adding to our number, and I hope there is a growing in grace. There seems to be a fresh stirring up to seek full salvation.

"I preached last Monday night on John xvii., 19, 20, 21, and the Lord gave me much liberty, especially whilst enlarging on the importance of sanctification:—1st, To christian fellowship—'That they all may be one;' 2nd, To divine communion—'That they may be one *in us;*' 3rd, To general usefulness—'That the world may believe.' My heart was warmed, and my soul enlarged, as I cried out—'Local Preachers, you will preach with more unction, more liberty, more success, when your souls are sanctified. Class Leaders, if you would be leaders indeed—leading your people into the deep things of God, get your souls sanctified. Prayer Leaders, you will pray with more power, fervency and faith, when your hearts are fully sanctified. And private members will become more active and faithful in reproving sin, &c.; and then you shall see the work revive, &c.' There was a gracious feeling prevailing, and a cry for clean hearts awakened. May the Lord pour on us his sanctifying Spirit! I hope the young members are steady and persevering; if any are otherwise, do not lose them for want of seeking after.

"DECEMBER 29.—I wrote the former part some days ago; since which I have been into the country, and must just tell you I have had a gracious week. God has indeed been with us, especially on the evening of Christmas day. I had a large congregation, many strangers, and the Lord opened my mouth and gave the word an unction. I have reason to hope several were convinced of sin. Two men notoriously wicked have since begun to meet in class. May God carry on His work!

"I conclude by requesting an interest in your prayers. Live to God. Live to be useful. Live for eternity. Lord, help *me* to do this! Amen. Your affectionate brother."

"Witney, December, 1827.

"To Rev. ——.

"I am glad your prospects, my dear brother, are brightening. A persuasion that we are where God would have us, and doing His will, gives a satisfaction that is invaluable.

"I have been the subject of trials, and have met with many discouragements; but these, I have no doubt, were necessary, and I hope I have profited from them. Perhaps, had it not been for these, I should have been in great danger of thinking too highly of myself; for the Lord has given me favour in the sight of the people, and a degree of success in my labours that might have laid me open to the temptation of pride. I do sincerely bless God for crosses as well as comforts. The work in our circuit is still going on. Mr. Cooke, our Superintendent, is indefatigable, and our local preachers generally are zealous and active. We preach every night excepting Saturdays, and our young people and children's meeting has so increased in number, that we are obliged to meet them twice—at three and six. We hope great good will result from this work. Have you read David Stoner's life? I was convinced more than ever, whilst reading it, of the necessity of preaching on the terrors of the law as well as the promises of the gospel. I think we should observe the order of the apostle's plan, Col. i., 28—'*Warning* every man, and *teaching* every man.' This is the way to preach Christ

with effect. I am glad to hear you are making progress in personal religion. Oh! let us never be found negligent in this particular, so as to give occasion to the world to say, 'Physician, heal thyself.' This morning at our five o'clock prayer meeting, we had a general cry for clean hearts.

"Oh! my dear brother, believe for this. Pray for it. Live for it. So shall you be a burning and shining light. I pray God to sanctify you wholly. Yours affectionately."

The work of grace in the circuit continued to revive and spread on every side.

"JANUARY, 1828.—God is reviving His work afresh among us. Sinners are turning to Him. Penitents are stepping into liberty. Believers obtaining full redemption. Glory to God! A fresh inquiry respecting sanctification. Some question the possibility of receiving it instantaneously, so as to know it. 'But what if some do not believe, shall their unbelief make the faithfulness of God of none effect? God forbid!'"

The following letter was addressed to a very worthy and laborious local preacher, whom Mr. H. had known some years before, and who had for some offence left the society. Mr. H., on hearing of this, had written to remonstrate with him, and the following is in reply to the answer which he received. In the church of Christ there will always be men whose opinions widely differ from each other, and some whose unreasonableness or obstinacy brings them into collision with their brethren. In such cases, kind forbearance, or liberal concession even beyond the strict award of justice, is frequently as judicious and as christian-like as it is necessary to the well being of the church. According to the apostolic rule, he is a wise man who is eminent for the "meekness of wisdom." (James iii., 13.) But for causes such as these, to take a step so serious, so awful, as to separate ourselves from the church of God, is to display a spirit as incompatible with the christian character, as it would be, if generally indulged, with the very existence of the church itself. How beautiful and how important is the exhortation of St. Paul (Ephes. iv., 1—3):—"I therefore, the prisoner of the

Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Nor will the sentiments of Mr. HENLEY on this subject be deemed unworthy of perusal.

"Barford, March 3, 1828.

"To Mr. ——.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Notwithstanding my disapprobation of your conduct which I *still* view as unjustifiable, I write to you as an old friend and brother. I see no good that could result from your leaving the connexion. If it were an evil that you could not remove, you should have endured it, rather than increase and make the breach wider, which would be the only probable effect of your conduct.

"What Mr. —— said about you at ——, must certainly be painful; but did you ask from him an explanation? Was he not misled by misinformation? or if not, ought you to turn your back on the connexion because of the conduct of one individual? I cannot from all I hear on the subject, think you acted with 'meekness of wisdom' in withdrawing yourself from the church of Christ. Oh! my brother, bear with me whilst I beg you to examine whether there were not a little pride and self-will in the case. This will mix itself frequently with our motives, while we may be calling it by different names, and give ourselves credit for a justifiable independence, and for making a firm stand for what is right. It would be much more honourable to the influence of grace, and more conducive to the peace and prosperity of the church, if we made it our study, as far as possible, to yield without betraying conscience.

"There is no part of your letter so pleasing as that which informs me of the increase of hearers at ——. May the Lord pour out his Spirit upon them, that they may be gathered into the church. With us our God is present. The last week was the most remarkable I ever witnessed for the display of saving grace. Last Sabbath was a glorious day. Oh! such agonizing for full salvation. On leaving the chapel, after

concluding the services of the day, one of our friends came after me to pray for a man who appeared in an agony for a clean heart, and could not be got from his knees. I went back, and after encouraging him to look up and believe for a present salvation, I knelt with him, and I think I never before felt such power to plead with God for another as then; and the power of the Lord came down, and several fell on their knees and cried aloud. We prayed, perhaps fifteen minutes, and he was heard to say, 'I will believe! Lord, give me a promise—only one promise, and I will believe.' I repeated, 'I will sprinkle clean water,' &c., and the Lord applied it immediately, so that he clapped his hands and cried out, 'He does cleanse me; I feel He does. Glory to God! I feel He hath cleansed me!' and thus his agonizing prayer gave place to shouts of praise, and we joined to sing,

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin," &c.

Within five minutes we were called upon to praise God on behalf of a woman who received the same blessing. The prayer meeting continued till ten o'clock. At a Watchnight, which we held in a village on Friday night, and continued till twelve o'clock, many were pardoned and some obtained sanctification. 'To God be *all* the praise!'"

Mr. H. soon had the pleasure of learning that his friend had retraced his steps, having returned to the church he had unwarily forsaken, and devoted himself anew to the service of God. The work at Witney was still going on prosperously; and the Lord added to the church daily. The following letter contains his own account of it.

"Witney, March 12, 1828.

"Rev. ——.

"My dear Brother,—I do not at present feel free to pledge myself to any circuit, but leave it with God. I would do His work in His way, and where He would have me. Though I do not pretend to be entirely disinterested as it regards a circuit, which may materially add to or take from a preacher's comfort; yet I feel a willingness to go where the Head of the church shall

appoint. And with this conviction, though it be to the 'farthest verge of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,' I would cheerfully obey. I want to glorify God and save souls;—to live, labour, study, pray, and preach for this alone. Oh! my dear brother, life is short. Souls are perishing. Let us work whilst we can. You will be glad to hear of our success. We have had a gradual increase in number for a long time, but about a fortnight ago we began to perceive some gracious intimation of a glorious revival. On a Sunday in February, at a lovefeast at Chadbury, three professed to receive the blessing of sanctification. The prayer meeting after continued until ten o'clock. On Monday another obtained a clean heart, and on Tuesday another at the same place. On Wednesday, at the morning meeting at five o'clock, several were in distress, and three were set at liberty. On my way through C—— that day, I called on an old backslider; whilst conversing with her she was much affected, and on praying with her she cried aloud for mercy, and we continued wrestling with God until He healed her backslidings and filled her with peace and joy. At night I preached a funeral sermon. The chapel was crowded to excess; many were in distress. Thursday morning, prayer meeting, three were set at liberty, and four more in the course of the day. On Friday we held a watchnight in a barn, when Mr. Marriott and your brother assisted; and whilst the people were praying and we thought of concluding, silent tears and suppressed sighs began to give place to loud cries for mercy. I went to one who had been long seeking, and after exhorting him to believe, prayed for him; soon the power of the Lord came down, and the wrestling with God for a present salvation became general—some for pardon, others for sanctification. After some time, one person stood up and began to praise God; then another and another received the blessing he sought, and again and again we sang—

'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'

Several stout-hearted sinners began to tremble. Many were awakened and decided to seek God. The meeting excited much interest and was a great deal talked about,

"On the following Thursday, we had another such a meeting, and many found peace. On Sunday night, after preaching, I told the people I would give them some account of the work of God in the circuit. Two-thirds of the congregation stayed; and whilst praying, the power of the Lord was present to wound and heal. Many were awakened and blessed. Every day this week, we have seen indications of good. There has been very little noise—no confusion. Praise the Lord! The excellency of the power is of God. This extra labour leaves me little time. My list of books, I fear, will be small. I have read Mosheim, 6 vols.; Watson's Institutes, 2 vols.; 5 vols. of Fletcher's Works; some biography, amongst which have been Bramwell's and Stoner's lives; Pascal's Thoughts, with a few others; and am now going through Wesley's Works, which I hope to finish before District Meeting. I feel no anxiety in reference to the coming Conference. I leave all with God."

"March 31.—On taking a review of the past, I have cause both for humiliation and for gratitude. I have, I think, read more lately—visited the sick and poor more; but alas! though I have been visited with many gracious quickenings, and frequently preached with more power, and have had especial assistance in prayer whilst conducting the services of the sanctuary; also have been favoured with more immediate fruit to my labour than in any former part of my life; yet I am conscious I have not derived so much personal advantage as I ought. I have been reading the lives of Stoner and Bramwell. Lord, have mercy upon me, and quicken me! Notwithstanding all my unfaithfulness, He gives me to feel that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin,' and I have this testimony that my ways please God.

"We have been holding Watchnights in nearly every part of the circuit during the quarter, and these have excited much interest. An almost general awakening has taken place; and the increase to our societies has far exceeded any preceding quarter. The last week was the most remarkable I ever witnessed. Our band meetings, too, promise to be very useful.

"On the 24th, at Chadbury, we had a lovefeast. We had several clear conversions, and some obtained the blessing of perfect love. Many were deeply wrought upon.

On Wednesday morning at five o'clock, preached from 'All flesh is grass.' Two young men found peace. On my way to H——, called on a woman who had been for years a backslider, but lately set out afresh. She cried aloud for mercy, and before we rose from our knees, the Lord delivered her, and put a new song into her mouth, even a song of praise.

"On Thursday, at Freeland, at the prayer meeting at five o'clock, three were set at liberty. Another, who left the chapel in distress, had her burden soon removed. On calling on her in the forenoon, there were three other sisters seeking God. While praying with them, they were much affected, and cried for mercy, and not in vain: first one, then another, and then the third felt that God, for Christ's sake, had blotted out her sins. Thus were four sisters in one family all born of God in one day; and that night, another relative, who had never attended preaching before, came, and resolved on giving her heart to God.

"On Friday found it a profitable day, while waiting upon God. Observed it as a day of fasting. Spent it partly in visiting the poor at Ensham. Felt all the day a believing expectation of a good meeting. It was published for a Watchnight. Had a barn lent us for the purpose. Began soon after seven, 1 Peter iii., 10, 11. At the close of sermon related the particulars of what I had witnessed in the week. Brother Marriott founded his exhortation on 'Offer unto God thanksgiving,' &c., Brother Judd on 'If any man love not,' &c. The feelings of the people appeared to be deeply devout and solemn. Silent tears and suppressed sighs prevailed. I then spoke a few words, particularly urging them to earnest prayer—to pray as though they were sure they should never have another opportunity; and soon after tears and sighs gave place to loud cries for mercy. I went to those who were in distress, and in a low voice encouraged them to believe. Such was the intense earnestness of all present, that there was

some appearance of confusion; some praying for pardon, some for sanctification, and others encouraging them. We had prayed a long time, and the distress still increased, before any were set at liberty. At length one arose and praised God for pardoning mercy. This gladdened our hearts, and we sung 'Praise God!' It also strengthened our faith that God would heal as well as wound. Soon one, and then another and another was enabled to believe in Christ. Others began to tremble and pray. As it was after eleven I gave out a dismission hymn, and pronounced the benediction, but not half-a-dozen left. It was long after midnight ere we closed. Twelve or fourteen professed to have found peace, and four or five sanctification. This surely is the work of the Lord—a work which many will not believe 'though a man declare it unto them.' May God help us to bear reproach for Christ's sake!

"Sunday.—This morning, whilst earnestly supplicating for a promise and a fresh baptism of the Spirit, these words were applied:—'Arise, shine, for thy light is come,' &c. O my God, give me thyself! Fire my soul with heavenly love, that wherever I go I may be a burning and a shining light.

"At Barford. Two men in distress. At the close of the sermon related an account of the work of God in the circuit, which appeared to excite a powerful interest in the minds of the people, some with gratitude, others with astonishment. A good feeling prevailed. At a prayer meeting after preaching, several remained in distress, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. Five were set at liberty very soon. Glory to God! Now I want to give myself to God afresh, and from this time to live in God constantly, that I may live for him.

"14.—Friday. This has been a glorious week. God has been with us every day; souls have been healed.

"On Sunday, met a class at nine. Preached at ten —'Grieve not,' &c., Eph. iv., 30. Met class at half-past one. Preached at three—'Be it known unto you.' Felt much assisted. One set at liberty whilst preaching, and several deeply affected. One young man was enabled to believe whilst praying with him in the vestry after

sermon. At five, preached in Corn-street—'Except ye repent,' &c. At six in the chapel—'Godly sorrow worketh repentance,' &c. After preaching, said I should give an account of the work of God in the circuit, and any one might stay. Two thirds remained, to whom I related what I had witnessed within the last fortnight. The power of the Lord came down. One began to cry aloud for a clean heart, and to pray for another who was in distress for pardon. I went down from the pulpit in the midst of the congregation to encourage and pray for them. Several were enabled to believe on the Lamb of God. Many stout-hearted sinners appeared to feel.

"On Monday four or five obtained pardon.

"Tuesday morning, five o'clock, two found peace. In the evening met three classes. Several who had found the Lord bore testimony that He hath power on earth to forgive sins.

"Prayed with the juvenile class in the upper room afterwards. Whilst sitting in the parlour alone, between nine and ten, heard sweet singing in the distance; on going to the door as they drew near, found they were a company from the Newland prayer meeting; but there were with them two who could not join in praising God, but were weighed down with the burden of sin. They came into the kitchen; we prayed for them, and the Lord enabled them by faith to lay hold on the promised pardon, so that they went on their way rejoicing. I expect a glorious meeting to-night at the chapel. O Lord, continue to work until 'the people shall be all righteous.'

"15.—Our expectations were not cut off. Last night, at the meeting, the body of the chapel was nearly full. Several were earnestly seeking. Three professed to receive full redemption, and one pardon. Many went away burdened and thirsting for redemption. Glory to God!

"Sunday, a good day. At Ensham, preached in the street from 'Seeing ye look for such things,' &c. Crowded congregation, and gracious feeling rested on the people; tears flowing all around. At six, at Hanborough. By the advice of Mr. Cooke, I had request-

ed a few of the friends of Witney to assist in the prayer meeting after preaching. Many had come also from several miles distant, in hopes of being delivered from the load of sin. On hearing this, I began to fear that they had taken wrong steps, and that the Spirit would be grieved for their looking too much to human means. Was deeply oppressed with this fear on entering the pulpit, and endeavoured to lead the minds of the people to the great source of all good. At the prayer meeting, many were wounded and healed. Requested the prayer leaders to endeavour to preserve as much order as was consistent with the carrying on the work of God. I made several attempts to conclude the meeting, but could not succeed until nearly eleven. Felt very much exhausted; but after getting a little refreshed, walked to Freeland, and thought I could have preached again were it necessary.

"Monday.—Felt the effects of yesterday's labour. Called on members and new converts; at one house, met with a person who said she hoped she should never feel as those persons felt last night. I asked her if she had not better feel the sorrows of repentance than the torments of hell; and whilst praying in the family and that God would break her heart, he enabled me to pray in faith; her heart was softened, and I left her in distress.

"On Tuesday, at Finstock, the work broke out.

"Wednesday, had a good deal of conversation with Mr. J. on the subject of revivals. His constitution of mind is such as would naturally make him averse to disorderly meetings and every thing tending to noise and confusion; but he saw nothing to condemn in Finstock, but believed it to be the work of God. Read the direction for revivals in the Magazine for 1798. Evening, went through the forest, accompanied by several from Chadbury, some to assist and others seeking rest for their souls; many who came mourning, went home rejoicing. On our return, the woods and the solitary places resounded with the praises of God.

"Friday, called on Mr. W——, who was for some time at college, intending to enter the church. He was convinced of sin two months ago, by reading 'Beaumont's Treatise on Faith,' lent him by one of

our members. Has since regularly attended our preaching, and this week stayed at the prayer meetings at Finstock and class meeting at Ramsdon. He says, when the people began to weep and cry for mercy, he was at first struck with wonder and almost disgusted; but he now began to think these people must be very earnest, or else very great hypocrites; the latter conclusion he dared not draw, and whilst he was pondering what to think, the power of the Lord so arrested him that a sacred awe pervaded his mind, and he became deeply affected in a manner he had never before been. He felt God was present.

"A Watchnight at Crowley I believe in all about twenty obtained the grace of God. It has been the most unpromising place in the circuit. Many came from Witney, Haily, Minster, &c. The place was crowded. Mr. Barr preached; Mr. Marriott, Mr. Judd, and I exhorted.

"23.—Felt difficulty in getting through the labours of the day; was very unwell—quite exhausted—lost my voice. Evening, at Bampton, one was set at liberty, and others in distress; but having no one to pray, I was obliged to send them away, for I could keep up no longer."

The affectionate interest in the members of his family, expressed in the following letters, and which exhibits the warmth of his domestic affections, will, it is hoped, be a sufficient apology for their insertion.

"Witney, May, 1828.

"My dear Brother,—I have been very anxious about you ever since your last. My fears on your account were expressed in my last to you, to which I begged an immediate reply, and none has yet reached me. Why is this? I thought you would have written without delay. After waiting for some time, I began to think, either I have been too severe in my suspicions and so have hurt his mind, or else my fears are well grounded: he has fallen, and does not like to acknowledge it. Now which is true? But I need not ask. I have recently heard facts that made my heart bleed. Oh! my brother, what shall I say to you?

My heart is enlarged towards you. 'Consider from whence thou hast fallen, and repent,' &c. You know the consequences if you do not. Do you ask what I have heard to call for such language? I will tell you. I heard that you, and two of my cousins, could mingle with the gay and trifling in the giddy scenes of worldly amusement, and degrade the rational character and disgrace the cause of God by mixing and mingling with the gayest of the gay. What, is this the religion of self-denial? Is this the soundness of the character required from the followers of the Saviour? Is this living to God?—redeeming the time?—letting your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ? What! such things exist in connexion with christianity? No, no. 'He that liveth in pleasure is dead (spiritually and legally) while he liveth,' and the end of those things is death eternal. Yes, my brother, if it be true (and I fear it is), you and my cousins have fallen, awfully fallen from the favour of God. For notwithstanding all he has done for you, you are, whilst capable of engaging in such practices, in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity. Your former attainments do but heighten the immoralities of your conduct; and be assured the sin of backsliding is a greater one than any or all you formerly committed. Oh! —— my heart yearns over you. How do I wish I could see you and weep over you, whilst I would urge you to set out afresh for God and heaven. Spirit of the eternal God! help me now to write something seasonable; and grant that thy quickening Spirit may bring it home with power to my brother's heart! You have been made whole; but you have sinned again, and a worse thing has come upon you. Deeper stains of guilt, greater condemnation, and a *more fearful doom* await the backslider. May you be saved from the *last state of such!* Have you repented? If not, oh! repent now. Hear the Shepherd and Bishop of souls calling you and expostulating—'How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? Return unto me, and I will return unto thee. I will heal thy backslidings and love thee freely.' You are perhaps tempted to despair of regaining your former state of experience. Listen not, for although

'there remaineth no more (no other) sacrifice for sin,' blessed be God, there remaineth the same. Come to the fountain as at first. Weep, believe, and sin no more!

"But what if my brother should have drunk in the Antinomian notion of a finished salvation, even for persons living in the practice of sin? I hope your Methodistical education—your reason—your common sense—your bible, have kept you from such views and sentiments. But when I considered how pleasing to flesh and blood, I began to fear lest the silver-tongued Dr. —— should have succeeded in instilling these principles into your mind: if so, I should almost give you up for lost. I would recommend a careful reading of Fletcher's Checks. Give my love to my cousins; read this to them; I mean it for you all. If I am too severe, it proceeds from kindness and love to your souls. Should I, after all, be mistaken in supposing you have backslidden to the degree I have hinted, do not be offended with me, but write and tell me all about it. I hope to visit home about Conference. I am requested to continue a third year in this circuit. I have good health, plenty of work, and an encouraging measure of success.

"My preparatory examination for Conference took place on Wednesday. Yours affectionately,

"J. H."

"Witney, May 30th, 1828.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—You must never feel grieved if I write more frequently to the younger members of the family at home than to you. I do so from a wish to do them good, as I feel free to say things to them for this purpose, which I need not to you. They are young and in danger. Whilst my inexperience would make it highly improper to be constantly giving my counsel to a mother, yet advice from an elder brother is as suitable as it is necessary.

"Do not think, then, that I forget my obligations to you or my father. I never felt more deeply my debt of gratitude, than since I have been called to sojourn at a distance from home. I have many friends, but

none like my father and mother;—many comfortable places of reception, but nothing like home,

'Home, home, sweet—sweet home!'

I am anticipating the pleasure of a visit after Conference, but on my next year's appointment must depend the exact time. I have had several invitations, but our friends here are anxious I should remain a third year. I dare not refuse, nor do I expect a more comfortable circuit; but I should like to get nearer Devon. I passed my examination without any difficulty. You ask whether I am taking any steps towards matrimony. I feel a sort of self-complacence in being able to answer in the negative. I am quite content and happy about it. At the same time I think I may not always be so, though I am as ignorant of the when and where as you are. I thank God that I have plenty of work to do. He is with us, and deigns to employ me as an unworthy instrument in saving souls from death. Mr. Cooke is a very kind Superintendent, and is both acceptable and useful in his ministry. The good work, of which I have already written to ——, still goes on, and every week souls are brought to God. Do not forget to pray for me. My love to *all* at home. I need not say I love them *all*. Oh! may we meet in heaven. So prays your affectionate son,

"JOHN."

"Monday.—Not knowing where to get a dinner, except at the public house, gave it up; but on coming to Aston, met a person who has shewn himself friendly towards us, who asked me to his house, and dined there.

"MAY 1.—Fast day. Lord, help me to humble myself, and to keep under my body, lest after I have preached to others I become a cast-away.

"3.—The Missionary Meeting in London.

"4.—Preached at Westminster. While preaching, a soldier came in, and after listening a little while came to the pulpit stairs, said he had come from his house, leaving his wife and family with a solemn vow never to return again; he had intended procuring poison to destroy himself; 'but,' said he, 'God mercifully brought

me to this chapel. Now what shall I do? I am such a sinner. Oh! pray for me. I am afraid there is no forgiveness for me.' I assured him of the readiness of God to forgive, directed him to take a seat in the chapel and hear the sermon; perhaps God would have mercy and forgive him whilst hearing; if not, we would afterwards pray for him. He sat down. After sermon, we prayed with him. God *had* mercy, and he went home, humbly purposing to live to God.

"18.—Preached in Oxford. Several found the pearl of great price; one an Irishman, who had but a few days before renounced popery. This man had commenced an attack on some of our Methodists, whose conduct he admired, with the benevolent wish of setting them right, considering it a pity that they should be lost by being out of the pale of the popish church. They proposed praying together that God would shew them which was right, each engaging to come over from the wrong to the right, should they be convinced. This was the proposal of the Methodists, for they found he could talk better than they could; and they were not prepared for the controversy, being unacquainted with it; but whilst at prayer God touched his heart, and he went to hear Mr. Newton preach the following Sunday; and on Monday Mr. N. had some talk with him. In the course of the week, he became fully convinced of the error of popery, renounced it, and came three miles on the Sunday to tell me of his determination to be a Methodist, and his earnest desire for salvation. He was much affected at the morning preaching; but in the evening, at the prayer meeting, he wrestled with God, and was enabled to rejoice in pardoning love. I have seen him since; it seems on the Friday following he obtained a clearer evidence of his acceptance and a deeper baptism of the Holy Spirit. He related the account at Freeland lovefeast. If faithful, he is likely to be useful.

"JUNE 27.—The last has been a good quarter. I trust I have been getting nearer to God, and growing more habitually serious, yet have been much beset with temptations, so that my evidence for sanctification has been obscured more than once; but God has graciously

appeared, and on two occasions in a remarkable manner in my behalf. I feel ashamed this day before Him for my short-comings and unfaithfulness. Lord, forgive me! In my public duties I have been happy and souls have been blessed. Twice in other circuits God has given me tokens of His goodness."

As the Conference was now approaching, Mr. H. received invitations from several circuits for the ensuing year. In reply to one, which was transmitted from the circuit in which the Rev. John Smith had been labouring with distinguished zeal and success, he addresed to him the following letter.

"Witney, June 3rd, 1828.

"Rev. John Smith.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I should have written you before now, but I know not what to say in reply to the invitation from your circuit. I feel a great inclination to accept it; but the friends in Witney have strongly pressed me to remain another year with them, and such is the state of the work here that I think I dare not refuse; and after deliberation and prayer, I have at length promised them that at least I would not engage for any other circuit.

"I know no other I should be so pleased to travel in as yours if I left Witney. I have had several invitations, but have refused. Should anything occur to prevent my re-appointment here, I should cheerfully come to Yeovil, if the way be still open; but I would not have the friends calculate on this at all. I would prefer their fixing on some other preacher at once. I rejoice in your success, and am thankful to have an interest in your prayers.

"You ask if I am living near to God. I dare not speak with much confidence on this point. I have not been living so near as I ought; but I trust I am getting nearer. The witness of my entire sanctification, I grieve to confess, is not quite so clear as it has been. I am ashamed of this, because I know it is through unfaithfulness. Oh! fool that I have been. But I bless God, He can—He doth *this* moment save! I now reckon myself dead indeed unto sin but alive unto

God. Lord keep me! Pray, pray, pray, my dear brother, that I may be kept. I bless God, whenever I have lost my confidence, I have not been long without regaining it; so merciful is He to an unfaithful worm. I want this 'constant union.' I want to 'see God in all things'—to be holy in little things, and to breathe no longer than I breathe my soul to Him. I do love study, but frequently feel condemned for not spending more time in closet devotions. I feel I must pray more in private. I praise God He is still with me in my public duties, making me to prosper, and giving me to see souls awakened, converted, and sanctified, more or less every week.

"We have had glorious days. In one of our little places our society has increased from thirty-four to above ninety during the year.

"At a lovefeast held there not long since, to which so many came, even from other circuits that we were obliged to occupy both a barn and chapel at the same time, the power of the Lord was present, and upwards of forty professed to obtain pardon or sanctification. The work has suffered a little check in the circuit town; I believe partly owing to our efforts to prevent noise and confusion in the meetings. But on Sunday night last, it revived afresh; many were in distress, and five found pardon. Last night, at the band meeting, we had a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit. One found pardon, and two obtained perfect love. We have very little opposition from any quarter.

"A few of the old members, who cannot approve, are afraid to oppose:—the greatest injury they do is by throwing out their suspicions and forebodings of a falling away. It seems to be an opinion almost current, that a revival will invariably be succeeded by a state of deadness, like the flowing of the tide is followed by an ebbing of the same. But why should it be so? Why should not the tide of divine influence continue to flow on and still increase? Why should revivals be periodical? Why not an unmingled and perpetually increasing prosperity? I firmly believe, if the churches would be faithful, and pray for and expect an incessantly flowing river of divine influence, it would be

given. And thus the stream would increase to a torrent, and the torrent to a mighty flood, that should speedily overflow the whole earth. Lord, hasten it! Amen.

"I anticipate the Conference with much pleasure, when I hope to bow with you at a throne of grace, and commune with you on the deep things of God. I want a band-mate very much, such an one as would enter into the holy of holies; and yet I feel I am not worthy to be the companion of such an one. Do, my dear brother, pray for me, that I may be kept from falling so as to disgrace the profession I make, I do resolve, by the grace of God, to walk more worthy of my high vocation. Pray, pray, pray for your affectionate brother,

"JOHN HENLEY,"

"JULY 4.—More free from temptation, I think, and living nearer to God.

"On Saturday night I was strongly tempted and deeply humbled. Saw myself as the unworthiest of all. My mind was truly distressed. When I considered my privileges, my high profession, and all the instances in which I had grieved the Holy Spirit, I felt myself as the veriest wretch on earth. Became distressed for the cause of God, lest I should mar the work in which God had made me useful, and perhaps increase the prejudices of some against revivals. On returning to my bedroom at Finstock at night, I thought I must not sleep in this state, for surely, without some manifestation of God's mercy, I cannot preach to the people to-morrow. In my distress I cried unto the Lord; and though at first I seemed to have no power, yet I was soon brought into a wrestling frame. Such was my agony, that I fell involuntarily prostrate on the floor. My prayer was not so much in reference to myself as to the work of God, that it might not be disgraced through me. I began to believe that if I continued to pray, God would give me some satisfactory answer; and I resolved not to rest until He had. And, glory for ever to His name, He answered, 'The desire of thine heart is granted thee.' I

was satisfied—arose from my knees, and praised the Lord for His goodness.

"Sunday, my soul was blessed, faith enlarged and strengthened whilst speaking. My subject, entire sanctification.

"15.—O my God, now on my knees I give myself again to thee. My body to be employed in thy service as a living sacrifice. I resolve in thy strength to mortify the flesh, to use abstinence and self-denial; and if sluggish and tardy in duty, to stir myself to those exertions which are for thy glory. Dwell in me, O thou Spirit of Holiness! O take my body, and put it to doing or suffering, but employ it solely for thy glory. I give thee my soul and mind with all its faculties. Sanctify me wholly. Take my affections, and let me have no will but thine. Give me the token of acceptance.

'If thou art well pleased to hear,
Come down, and bless me now.'

"On Sunday, I preached six times without any inconvenience."

Mr. HENLEY had now been engaged in the active duties of the Methodist ministry for four years; and having thus completed the period of probation which is appointed to every minister of that church, the time had arrived when he was to be solemnly set apart to the work to which he was devoted. His preliminary examination before his fathers and brethren at the District Meeting was very satisfactory. His theological knowledge was found to be extensive and accurate; his ministerial ability was attested by all the congregations among whom he had laboured; and his extraordinary success afforded delightful proof that he had been commissioned from above. At the Conference of this year, after the usual public and private examinations, the result of which was highly creditable alike to his piety, his good sense, his proficiency in study, and his general character, he was solemnly ordained to the Methodist ministry. He had originally entered upon this service with the purest motives, and he never questioned even for a moment that he was in his proper sphere. The vows which he made at his ordina-

tion only embodied the principles and rules by which he had ever been guided; and he continued to fulfil them with spotless purity, with unvarying consistency, and with extraordinary fidelity and zeal, to his life's end.

The arrival of the Conference terminated Mr. HENLEY'S ministry at Witney. The period of his residence there he was accustomed to refer to as the most interesting and the most useful of his life; and it is perhaps true that his labours in no other place were more signally owned of God. He entered upon the circuit in the spirit of self-dedication, and that spirit pervaded with undeviating uniformity his whole ministry. His zeal for the honour of the Saviour and the glory of God was characterized by a fervour and constancy seldom equalled; and so tender was his compassion for perishing sinners, that it made him forgetful of every other consideration in his anxiety to snatch them from perdition. His personal fatigue, the state of his health, the remonstrances of his friends, and the advice of his excellent superintendent, would often dictate the necessity of some intermission of his toil—some intervals of repose; but in vain. Deaf alike to affectionate entreaty and to judicious remonstrance;—regardless of the stupid indifference or open opposition which he too frequently encountered;—superior to the shame which would have kept many from the course he pursued;—one only object engaged his attention—one business engrossed his soul; he thought and felt, he laboured and lived for this alone, that he might by any means save souls from death. Like the enthusiastic student, whose mental vision, intensely fixed on the one darling object of his pursuit, at length magnifies its proportions until to his imagination its most trivial details become of transcendent consequence, and all beside is insignificant and unworthy; so to the mind of Mr. H. there was but one subject of interest, one object of importance: nothing which tended to promote this was trivial in his estimation; while the voice of prudence and the remonstrances of his friends who with affectionate importunity would fain have dissuaded him from his measureless and self-sacrificing exertions, were un-

heeded or unheard. And who but must be constrained to acknowledge, that the object which he aimed at was well worthy the estimate which he formed of it? If the soul be of such incomparable value that it "calls the astonishing magnificence of unintelligent creation poor;"—if its redemption were worthy to be the peculiar object of divine solicitude, and to devise the means of its accomplishment "High heaven held solemn council;"—if the Father gave his only begotten Son, the brightness of His glory;—if Jesus humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross;—if the Spirit condescends to dwell with man, with ever active influence to quicken, to enlighten, and renew;—if eternal wisdom has devised and employed a vast and complicated agency of means to save the soul of man; then that soul must possess an importance so vast, a worth so mysterious and immeasurable, that to contribute to its salvation, though in the remotest degree, is to fulfil a service the most sublime, the most honourable, which can occupy the mind of an intelligent being. Yes, Mr. HENLEY correctly appreciated the object which he aimed at, when he deemed it worthy to engross his whole anxiety and to be the business of his life. But the worthiest pursuit may be prosecuted imprudently and unwisely; and for some parts of Mr. H.'s conduct it will be difficult to find an adequate apology. The duties which God requires of his creatures are usually perfectly compatible with each other; and the most faithful minister may so fufil his responsible service as to shew himself approved unto God, without exhausting his spirit by restless anxiety, or by ceaseless and excessive toil bringing himself to an untimely grave. True it is, that this is a fault which "leans to virtue's side," and one the opposite to which is of by far most frequent occurrence; but it is a *fault* notwithstanding, and the path of wisdom lies between the two extremes. The minister is responsible not for success, but for fidelity. He is called to preach the word, plainly, constantly, zealously; and to commend the result to God. "Whether they hear, or whether they forbear;" whether the seed be "received in an honest and good heart," or with careless indif-

ference;—he shall still be to God a sweet savour of Christ, both in them that be saved and in them that perish. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall he be glorious in the eyes of the Lord." But if, by the indulgence of an anxious impatience to witness fruit to his labours, he allow his spirit to be enfeebled; if by protracted and excessive exertions he exhaust his physical energy, thus unfitting himself for the adequate fulfilment of his ministry, and inducing premature decay; he mistakes his commission, defeats his own object, and deprives the church of a labourer in the prime of his days, who might by more judicious conduct have successfully prosecuted his ministry to advanced age.

Such, it must be acknowledged, was the fault of Mr. HENLEY, though it is one which should be rather silently mentioned as a caution to others, than remarked upon with severity of censure.

His desire to witness the salvation of souls often amounted to intense mental anguish, which preyed upon and overwhelmed his spirit; and his personal exertions were frequently so great and so protracted, as far to exceed the bounds of prudence. Mention has already been made of his preaching five, six, and even seven times in one Sabbath day; and these, be it remembered were not brief exhortations, but frequently discourses of considerable length, and delivered with impassioned earnestness and fervour. He usually conducted the whole service without assistance, and frequently, and especially out of doors, led the singing himself. Besides this, he commonly attended the morning prayer meeting, and held a similar meeting after evening service, which, if any persons were in distress, and good appeared to be done, he would sometimes protract to a late hour. None can fail to perceive that labour such as this was too much for any man, and would, if persisted in, destroy the most vigorous health, and undermine the soundest constitution. Nor was the following, or any other day, one of relaxation. On the contrary, the dawn of Monday found him at the early prayer meeting, and he frequently preached at five o'clock twice or thrice during the week. The middle of the day was employed in pastoral visits; and

at twelve o'clock he would endeavour to meet the people returning from their work, and if he could get a few to listen, would preach to them. The afternoon was spent in walking to his country appointment, and in visiting the neighbouring villages; and after preaching in the evening, he frequently held a prayer meeting and then walked home, reaching it perhaps not until a late hour at night. Thus every day witnessed the renewal of his labours; and to those who knew him it was matter of astonishment, how amid such multiplied engagements he found time for those private duties of devotion, study, and correspondence, which he was known never to neglect. The result, however, told fearfully upon his constitution. in several parts of his journal, at this period, he complains that he suffered from pain in his back, head-ache, and weakness; and it was evident to all, that he laboured above his strength. Often did his friends beseech him to intermit or abate his excessive exertions, and repeatedly did his kind Superintendent attempt to restrain him; but in vain. The zeal of the Lord's house had eaten him up; and his anxiety to witness the prosperity of God's cause made him reckless of that sacrifice of health and life, at the cost of which he was endeavouring to promote it. Before the conclusion of this year, however, he found that his health was seriously giving way, and this was one reason which induced him to decide on leaving the circuit, with the determination of acting with more caution in his next appointment. Unhappily this determination was not long remembered: borne away by strong desires to rescue souls from the eternal burning, he renewed and persisted in a course of exertion to which no human strength was equal, and thus at length a naturally fine constitution was irretrievably impaired, and his bereaved family and his sorrowing friends are called to mourn his untimely removal from their society, and from his sphere of usefulness in the church of God.

But while the writer feels it incumbent on him to make impartial mention of what he regards as a fault in Mr. HENLEY, he feels how difficult it is to speak with censure of that in which there is so much

to admire, or to caution others against the imitation of what was in itself so exemplary. The principle which animated Mr. HENLEY was that which fired the ardour of Whitefield and Wesley, sustained the martyrs at the stake, glowed in the bosoms of the apostles and prophets; nay, which brought the Saviour down from heaven, and led Him to submit to suffer and to die! It was a flame of celestial origin, kindled and fed by God himself. And while its sacred intensity consumed the earthly tabernacle of our sainted friend, it became a chariot of fire to bear his spirit to the skies, and to fit him to share the society and partake the bliss of enraptured angels and burning seraphim before the throne of God.

CHAP. VII.

"THEN HAD THE CHURCHES REST, AND WERE EDIFIED, AND WALKING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD AND IN THE COMFORT OF THE HOLY GHOST, WERE MULTIPLIED."—ACTS IX., 31.

Sherborne Circuit—State of the People—Letter to Mr. Marriott—Visit to Torquay—Journal—Letter to his Parents—What Learning is essential for the Minister—Two Letters to his Brother—Excessive Labour—Letter to a Friend—To Mr. Marriott—Journal—Letter to Mr. Early—To Mr. C.—Pastoral Letter—Methodism and the Church—Letter to a Friend—To Mr. B.—To the Society at Witney—To Mr. and Mrs. Marriott—To the Society of Northleigh—To a Friend on Revivals of Religion—To Mr. M.—To a Friend—To Mr. L.—Labours and Trials—Journal—Appointed a Second Year—Extracts—Letter to a Friend—Prosperity of the Work—Letter to the Rev.——.—To his Brother—Accident—Instances of Usefulness—Leaves the Circuit. 1828—30.

In the latter part of the month of August, 1828, Mr. Henley proceeded to his new appointment in the Sherborne circuit, in which his place of residence was at Yeovil. This circuit had been for the two preceding years blessed with the labours of the Rev. John Smith, whose ministry was eminently successful, and toward whom the people generally cherished an ardent and grateful attachment. The state of the congregations and societies throughout the circuit, was prosperous and encouraging; the work of grace had deepened and extended on every side, a considerable revival had been already witnessed, and many anticipated yet more happy days. Under these circumstances, it will not be wondered at that the removal of Mr. Smith, to whose instrumentality much of this was attributable, was a matter of deep regret to the people, and changed their animated hopes into fear and despondency.

The situation of a minister on entering a sphere of labour in which his predecessor has been unusually acceptable and useful, is far from an agreeable one. He can scarcely hope that his own ministry or mode of proceeding will be equally grateful to the people with that to which they have been accustomed; and without great watchfulness, he will be depressed and discouraged by the decided preference for his predecessor which many injudicious persons will not fail to express. Under these disadvantages Mr. HENLEY entered upon his labours in the Sherborne circuit, and he was by no means insensible of their magnitude. He had himself an affectionate veneration for the character of his excellent predecessor. The estimate which he entertained of his own abilities was a very humble one; while he could not but be aware how much the labours of Mr. S. had been honoured, and how generally he was beloved. But he was happily preserved from discouragement or depression. He regarded his appointment to Yeovil as ordered by the providence of God; and in the exercise of his accustomed trust in the power of His word, and the sufficiency of His grace, he entered upon his sphere of labour. He commenced his ministry at Yeovil, by preaching from Col. i., 27, 28—"Christ in you the hope of glory, whom we preach;" taking occasion to discuss two leading topics, the subject and the design of the christian ministry. He enjoyed much liberty in preaching, and the powerful influence of the Spirit accompanied the word. The congregation was large, and they heard with pleasure and with profit. Many thanked God that His providence had sent them so worthy a successor to their late revered minister, and entertained pleasing hopes that he would be made a general blessing. His visits to the other parts of the circuit were attended with similar results; and his singleness of purpose, his untiring zeal, and his deep piety, speedily raised him in general estimation. He was blessed with a most affectionate and judicious colleague in the Rev. N. Sibly, with whom he laboured with uninterrupted harmony, and whose kind counsel and cooperation he greatly prized and frequently adverted to in after life.

Mention has been made in the chapter preceding, of his visit to Torquay, immediately on the conclusion of the Conference. In this visit, as usual, the spiritual benefit of all with whom he had intercourse was his first and chief object, and his labours were made a remarkable blessing. His own account of it, as well as of the commencement of his ministry at Yeovil, is contained in the following letter and extract from his journal.

"Sherborne, September, 1828.

"To Mr. Marriott.

"MY VERY DEAR SIR,—I promised several of the friends, they should hear from me as soon as I had any good news to tell them: I thank God that time is come. The Lord has been pleased to give me several tokens of His favour since I left. At Torquay, amongst my own friends, I have reason to believe my visit was rendered useful. I met the classes and preached many times, and on the Sunday night especially I was much assisted in expostulating with sinners, and the power of the Lord gave efficiency to the word. Some were pricked to the heart, and several backsliders were reclaimed. The greater part of the congregation remained after preaching, with the society. I told them of the work of God at Witney. The people were much affected, and when we commenced praying, several began to cry for mercy. One had found peace during the sermon, and eleven or twelve others professed to be set at liberty, and one to obtain full salvation before we left. Numbers came about the door and windows, and some 'who came to scoff, remained to pray,' and went away rejoicing. I continued with them until I was quite exhausted, and at about eleven came away to get my supper, but finding after I had finished that my brother did not come home, I went to the chapel again, and found a number still there and in distress; three more were set at liberty before we closed, which was not until after midnight. The following night we had a large congregation; I preached from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, and there was indeed a noise and a shaking. Four or five were set at liberty. Surely this is the Lord's work. In this circuit too, the Lord

is with us, and the converting and saving power is realized. On Sunday, 14th September, I preached at Yeovil. After preaching, I proceeded as I did at Torquay, and urged the people to pray fervently for an outpouring of the Spirit. The Lord favoured us with the droppings before the shower. Eight or nine professed to have obtained remission of sin. On Monday night, at giving tickets, two obtained full salvation and some a sense of pardon. At two country places much good is doing. On Sunday last, I preached out of doors twice. In meeting the society, we had a gracious season. On Wednesday, we had a most glorious love-feast at Sherborne. The scene that presented itself was almost alarming even to *me*. Ten or twelve penitents of different ages went up to the communion weeping, apparently insensible to all around, and fell on their knees giving vent to their feelings in loud and piercing cries. Eighteen or nineteen found peace with God, and one full redemption. Glory to God! My Witney friends will praise God for what He is doing here. I think of you all very often, and in my happiest moments; and I do not forget to pray that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that you may be kept 'sincere and without offence until the day of Christ.'"

"YEOVIL, SEPT. 12.—Since I wrote last, have had many mercies, and also had to pass through deep waters, and this perhaps, instead of an exception, is, or may be, one of the richest blessings I have to record. On leaving Witney I received much kindness. The warm affection of that dear people is a source of gratitude to Him who gave me such friends, and made me useful, and gave me favour in their sight. May God bless them abundantly! The parting was painful. On Sunday, at Witney, the chapel was crowded, so that many who sat under the gallery withdrew from fear. I preached from 'I take you to record that I am clear from the blood of all men.' At the prayer meeting, several found peace. On Monday night, I took my leave of the society. I kept up until the last morning, but when attempting to give out a hymn at the prayer meeting, I could not articulate. I thank God for the affection of

this dear people. Many came in the morning to see me off. On the Wednesday after my arrival at the London Conference, I was received into full connexion, with forty-seven others. It was a solemn season. I deeply felt my unworthiness to receive this honour. The vows of God are upon me! Oh! may I feel more deeply than ever, how solemn, how responsible is the office with which through grace I am entrusted! Holy Spirit, come and baptize me now with fire! The discussions in Conference I hope will be profitable to me. Left town for Devon, and was once more delighted to be in my father's house, and to find all well. Met classes, and had full work whilst there; and the Lord gave a blessing.

"19.—Praise the Lord, He hath been with me, and encouraged me by favouring me with some fruit. I begin to feel at home amongst the people. In giving tickets have been much pleased. Many appear to be deeply pious. On Saturday last, whilst in the penitent meeting, felt my soul much drawn out, and began to have power with God in prayer. At Yeovil, on the Sabbath, the power of the Lord was present. At the five o'clock prayer meeting, enjoyed a blessed season."

Scarcely had MR. HENLEY entered upon his scene of labour in the Sherborne Circuit, before the gracious Lord began to honour his instrumentality in the conversion of souls. He found the congregations numerous and deeply attentive, and the people prepared to receive the ingrafted word. Among the members of the church many were ready to lend all the assistance in their power in holding prayer meetings or in other ways; and thus encouraged, he entered with his wonted ardour upon his work, and speedily found that 'the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hands." He gratefully describes some instances of this in the following letter to his beloved parents.

"Sherborne, September 26th, 1828.

"I suppose my dear Father and Mother have been wondering they have not heard from me; but I thought I would not write until I had seen a little of my circuit. I have now been nearly all round it, and have

every reason to believe I shall be happy. I am much pleased with the people, as far as I have seen them; they appear very affectionate and pious. Brother John Smith, my predecessor, seems to have been very eminently useful, and the piety of the people is, apparently, in many instances deep. I have not so much of the Superintendent's company as I could wish. I live at Yeovil, and am on that side of the circuit three-fourths of my time. I believe I am again highly favoured in having a most kind and excellent Superintendent. I feel desirous of devoting myself afresh to God, to lay out all my strength in His cause; and I feel assured that if I consecrate my whole time, talents, and strength to the work (and less than this would be sinful), He will give me *fruit*. Nothing less than awakenings and conversions of sinners will satisfy me; and I bless God, past experience has proved He can employ such a worm as I am in the infinitely important and delightful work of saving souls. I trust I shall preach more zealously for this in every sermon than ever. The Lord has been pleased to give me some proof that I am in my place by already granting me some success. On Sunday week last I preached at Yeovil, and the Lord poured out his Spirit, and wounded and healed. A great number of the congregation remained after preaching, with the society. Whilst giving account of the revival at Witney, many were deeply affected; several cried aloud for mercy, and eight or nine found peace before we left, which was not until a late hour. There was no confusion, nor any noise, except from the cries of those in distress. The next night two obtained full salvation. At two other places in the week, we felt the power of the Lord. On Wednesday last, we had a lovefeast at Sherborne. The speaking was frequently interrupted by distressing cries for mercy, until at last, all attempts to procure silence so that each one might be heard to speak, were fruitless. I then urged the penitents to come together, that one at a time might pray for them and order might be preserved. The scene that presented itself was truly affecting; I was obliged to beg them to restrain their feelings that the person praying might be heard. We mingled exhortation, singing,

and prayer, and the Lord was pleased to hear in their time of trouble, and He delivered them out of their distress; eighteen or nineteen found peace with God, and one, full redemption in the blood of Christ. Glory to God on high! This is the Lord's work. I trust good is going on with you. It will, if you are willing to let God work in his own way, and all the people join heart and hand to help forward the ark of God. Tell the friends from me, to be sure and keep the fire burning in their own hearts. Let every member be a living coal of holy fire, and wherever he goes he will shine, and when they come together the fire will burn, and the light and influence blaze around, and thus

'All will catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss!'"

A younger brother of Mr. HENLEY had at this period impressions on his mind that he was called to exercise his abilities as a Local Preacher; but having much diffidence on the subject, he wrote to Mr. H. for his opinion and advice. The following letter was written in reply, and will be read with interest and advantage by all whose attention is directed toward the work of preaching the Gospel. The Methodists have from very early times been charged with employing an ignorant ministry, but the charge is really without foundation. If by ignorance be meant the absence of an acquaintance with classic literature, with the systems of philosophy, and with the discoveries of science, it may be granted that many of the preachers among the Methodists are ignorant; but so were most of the apostles of our Lord, whom yet he deemed fit for and worthy of the ministry of the gospel. But this is not the question. A lawyer is not counted ignorant because he does not understand botany, nor a physician because he neglects to familiarize himself with the subtleties of Aquinas and the schools; but if the former be unacquainted with the principles of jurisprudence, or the latter with the science of medicine, though in other respects his knowledge comprehends the whole circle of the sciences, this will not shield him from the imputation of ignorance, nor screen him from popular contempt. Just so, a

preacher may be ignorant of a vast variety of subjects which, though important in themselves, are foreign to his calling; and yet, if he be well skilled in the science of salvation, mighty in the scripture, and wise to win souls to Christ, he may be far and honourably removed from the reproach of ignorance; nay, a preacher may perhaps be in the possession of general knowledge, and resolve to forget or conceal it, and with St. Paul "determine to know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ and him crucified," and yet shew himself approved to God. While on the other hand, he may be well versed in classic mythology, deeply read in the philosophy of Plato, and perfectly skilled in the discoveries of modern science; and yet, if he be ignorant of God, of Christ, and of the way of life, he will be utterly, palpably, shamefully, unworthy of and unfit for the office of a preacher of the Gospel. It is "the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord," which can alone make any man "of quick understanding" in divine things, and which is the first and indispensable qualification for the ministry. Every man who is truly called of God to preach, can say with St. John—"That which we have seen and heard, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you." This experimental knowledge of religion the Methodists have ever regarded as absolutely indispensable; nor have any been permitted to exercise the sacred office among them, who have not been believed to possess it. The Methodist ministers only *profess* to shew to men the way of salvation, and of that *they have never been ignorant*.

Not that the design of these observations is to depreciate the value of an educated ministry;—far from it. The mind, when stored with various knowledge and disciplined to the habit of close and accurate thinking, is better fitted for the detection of error, and the discovery, defence, and illustration of the truth; and the ability to deliver that truth in correct and forcible language, confers an advantage of which every minister should be anxious to avail himself; and it is to the honour of the Methodists, that they have made provision to give the candidates for the ministry among

them that course of intellectual training which is adapted to render them workmen needing "not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

"To Mr. Richard Henley.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I need not repeat, that as far as I can judge of the nature of your feelings and impressions in reference to preaching, it is your duty to make trial, and therefore I quite approve of your proposed step. The essay of Edmondson, you say, rather discouraged you; but why? I think it need not. It was designed principally for those who are wholly given up to the work; and as to many of the things spoken of as helpful, they, though excellent in their place, are not *indispensable*. You think a teacher should be above the common level. In reference to piety, and the doctrines of the gospel, I think he should. But if you mean that in point of mere learning and intellect it is absolutely necessary that a preacher of the gospel should be superior to those who hear him, you go too far, for you cannot but know that God frequently employs the comparatively illiterate in preaching the word and shewing the plan of salvation; and with a tolerable acquaintance with the scriptures, and a heart deeply interested in the cause of God and precious souls, illiterate and intellectually inferior men have preached under the influence of the Holy Ghost with power and success. Thus God chooses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. I do not say this to lessen in the least degree your thirst for knowledge and improvement. Strive to excel, and cultivate your mind diligently. 'Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.' Let the love of God and love of men fill your soul to overflowing, that it may flow out in streams of hallowing influence in all your words and works. In my last, I said a word about the choice of texts and subjects. I again repeat, choose the plainest, most important, and striking text; and as to style, I would advise you in composing, study to be correct and chaste, but do not study eloquence of diction, nor aim at a flowery style. Carefully avoid words that are not generally understood.

Guard also against too many words—the shorter the sentences, usually the more pungent. Preach to the conscience—to the heart; and do not be afraid to wander from the subject *to the heart* when you are led to it. I would advise you to write as much as you can, and as correctly; but when you stand up to speak, be not too anxious to be correct. Many in their anxiety on this point hamper themselves, and that very anxiety makes them blunder. When you happen to mistake, do not be terrifying yourself about what one or the other will think, but go on.

"Through mercy, the Lord is still reviving His work. We have had many awakenings and conversions during the last fortnight, and several have obtained sanctification. We had a glorious lovefeast last night. Began at six. When I had finished speaking, there were two up at once, and until nine not a minute was lost; frequently three or four were waiting to tell of God's love. We then prayed until a little after ten, and the power of the Lord came down; several were saved, but as many were in distress, we continued to pray with them until twelve o'clock. I think ten or twelve found pardon. I am yours affectionately,

"J. H."

The following letter to the same brother was written a few weeks after the former.

"My dear Brother,—I should have written you before, but as usual, complain of want of time; perhaps I ought rather to find fault with myself for not husbanding my time better. It is true I have much to do, and I seem to be always busy, and yet to myself I appear to be doing nothing. This I am sure of, I do nothing as I ought to do. Lord, help me!

"On coming to this circuit, I renewed my covenant with God, and resolved to throw my soul into the work before me; and I bless God, he has given me some little liberty, power, and fruit. The most I have to contend with, in reference to my labours, is, the complaints and entreaties of kind friends, who are afraid of my injuring myself and shortening my life by too much work; and sometimes this staggers me, and I almost resolve I

will not again preach five times in a day; but when I recollect that God can give strength according to the day, and that a short and useful life is better than a long and useless one, I feel encouraged to press forward,

'To labour on at God's command.'

Still, while I am labouring for others, and God is in some measure owning my feeble efforts, I feel ashamed that I do not make more out myself. What, if after preaching salvation to my fellow creatures, I should be lost myself? I have had many gracious quickenings, and sometimes get very near the throne; but O! shame to me, I am so unsteady. Why do I not live to God in every breath I draw, and see Him in all things? I must have more of Christ! How is it with my brother? Are you getting on, and rising higher and higher in salvation and the climes of bliss, and sinking lower and lower in all humility and self abasement? Are you bearing a constant and consistent testimony, by your temper, conversation, and whole deportment, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin? Beware, my brother, of an assimilation to the world. Alas! how many professors can be devout with christians one hour, and trifle with the world the next. This religion will not do. The friendship with the world is enmity with God. Whatever others do, be you filled with the Spirit."

From the preceding letter it will be seen, that while, as a mighty christian racer, Mr. H. was pressing to the goal, as a minister, he was maintaining the same ardour of zeal and energy of effort for which he had ever been so remarkable. Unhappily, too, there was the same recklessness of the suggestions of prudence and of the advice of his friends as to the frequency and amount of his labours. The physical suffering which he had endured at Witney, and which was sometimes very great, the purposes which he had there formed, and the promises he had made to moderate his exertions, were, alas! all forgotten. One of his friends at Yeovil remarks:—"I heard him preach twice in the open air and three times in the chapel in one day, all different sermons and not short ones; besides which

he attended the early prayer meeting and addressed the Sunday School. I remonstrated with him on the impropriety of thus trifling with his constitution; and in reply, he told me that in his former circuit he had frequently preached seven times in one day. I told him, I feared that by such labours he would injure a good constitution and sow the seeds of disease for the future; but I could not persuade him to think so; indeed, the burden of souls seemed to overwhelm him." It is impossible not to deplore the imprudence by which the church was prematurely deprived of so efficient a minister; while it is equally impossible to withhold from his character the warmest admiration, and to honour the lofty motives by which he was inspired.

One of the immediate results of his excessive labours was the frequent occurrence of extreme depression of spirits, and a distressing susceptibility of anything of a painful nature. To this he refers in the following letter.

"Yeovil, October 3rd, 1828.

"My Dear Brother,—I have been waiting to give you some account of my circuit.

"Many of our society are quite young in the way, and were brought in chiefly through the instrumentality of Brother John Smith, now in London East. I find much work to do. I have more of the care of management on my head, as this part of the circuit is seldom visited by Mr. Sibly, and several of the places not at all. I want more wisdom—more energy—more holiness. Pray for me; and if I live in the affections of my C—— friends, let me have an interest in their prayers. I have had to pass through deep and bitter waters since I saw you, and my state of mind has been beyond description to be dreaded—a continued depression of spirits, dark and bewildered; yet through grace I am preserved, and have come off, I trust, with an increase of humility and wisdom. Praise the Lord! I have lately had some gracious and powerful manifestations of the goodness of God, and then my faith has been strengthened, and my evidence of entire holiness bright. Last Sunday, at the prayer meeting after preaching, whilst pleading with God for an out-

pouring of His Spirit, my soul was almost overpowered; and last night in the country, when praying after sermon, I had power with God, and my soul was so filled with glory that for some time I could scarcely utter anything else but shouts of praise.

"The work in the circuit had received a shock, and several had gone back, just before and during the Conference. But, praise the Lord! He hath again visited us, and we have had some powerful meetings. On Sunday last, we had a few drops; eight or nine found peace with God, and two obtained full salvation.

"Last Wednesday week, we had a glorious lovefeast. The cries of those in distress were so great that the speaking could not be heard. We got the penitents together, and commenced a prayer meeting for them. The noise so far exceeded any thing I ever heard in Oxfordshire, that I yielded to temptation, and became confused and dead. At length I requested them all to cease praying whilst I addressed them. We then begged all to unite in solemn and silent prayer, and it was a blessed season. Before we left, eighteen or nineteen were made happy in the pardoning love of God, and one received a full salvation. My C—— friends will, I trust, praise God with us."

The work of grace was at this time prospering in every part of the circuit. In several places preparations were made to enlarge chapels or erect new ones, and several additional places were opened with encouraging prospects of success. Mr. HENLEY'S ardent wish to see souls saved at every meeting, appeared to be well nigh realized, and several remarkable conversions took place. Of some of these mention is made in the following letter to Mr. Marriott.

"Yeovil, October 31st, 1828.

"You too, my dear friend, are complaining of me; but I have not forgotten you. Oh! no, I shall always love my Witney friends, though I may never see them again in this world; and I shall have them in remembrance at the throne of grace, and encourage the hope of meeting them in heaven, to recount past scenes and mingle our adorations around the throne of glory. I

bless God that He has again cast my lot with a kind people, and given me a prospect of good. But we want the shower, the stream, the torrent of saving influence. Our congregations have considerably increased. On Monday last, a work broke out, which I hope will spread and deepen. The power of the Lord was remarkably present. I had preached five times the day before; and on that day had walked and rode a great many miles, so that with preaching out of doors on the foundation of one of our new chapels, I was quite exhausted before the evening service begun, but was remarkably assisted with energy and influence in preaching; and at the prayer meeting many cried aloud for mercy. One poor old lame man, with all the infirmities of age, was on his knees nearly the whole of the time in deep distress, despairing of mercy, and left at last comfortless.

"A man, an infidel, was powerfully wrought on. May it end in his conversion! The next day, whilst visiting the people, I called on an old backslider; and when praying with her, she cried aloud for mercy and the Lord healed her. At night, had a prayer meeting, which ended in a kind of lovefeast, for one after another stood up to tell of what God had done for their souls. May they hold fast! We have begun to hold Watchnights on the plan we did at Witney last winter. I believe public band meetings are of great importance. I could wish more of our people would meet in band. Ought not our leaders and leading people to shew the example? We have an excellent select band here, and another at Sherborne. Some of them very holy, and nearly all of them bearing a consistent testimony that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin."

"November 1.—I have been sorely tempted, but through mercy have overcome.

"What an important work is that in which I am engaged. How dignifying, and yet how awful. Lord, give me to feel the value of souls. How unworthy am I to fill this office! May God quicken me! Instruct me! Strengthen me! Above all, sanctify me wholly! Cleanse me from secret faults, and keep me clean. I want more power, and a closer union with God.

"7.—The Lord has been very gracious to me since I last wrote; have had many blessed seasons, but still have to complain of myself of much instability. We have had two lovefeasts, powerful meetings. There are some pleasing indications, but I want to see souls saved at every meeting, and all the members pressing onward. I have preached out of doors several times in different parts of the circuit.

"DECEMBER 2.—Preached at laying the foundation stone of the new chapel at Charlton.

"Last Sunday preached at five in the street at Sherborne. Not less than a thousand were present and were very attentive, whilst I urged the necessity of the new birth.

"28.—I trust I have made a little advancement, yet oh, how *little!*

"29.—At Yeovil, whilst praying, after I had met the society, I had such a blessed and overwhelming sense of God's love as I never before experienced. I was carried beyond myself. Could only exclaim for some time, 'Glory to God! Glory to God! 'Tis love! 'Tis love!'

> 'O the grace unspeakable!
> While eternal ages roll,
> God delights in man to dwell,
> Soul of each believing soul.'

"I trust I have retained something of the savour of it ever since. Several times since I have felt something of this overwhelming power of divine love producing the most ecstatic feeling of bliss unspeakable; and yet how little do I serve God in return, and how little good is done. O Lord, revive thy work!

"24.—Went to Trowbridge to see my old and valued friend Mr. Cooke, and assist at Missionary Meetings, preaching every day. Attended also at the opening of a chapel in the Melksham circuit. Mr. Cooke preached in the evening, but as hundreds could not get in, I preached outside to them from Rom. v., 20."

The mingled tenderness and fidelity breathing in the following letter cannot but prove a sufficient apology for its insertion.

"Sherborne, 1828.

"To Mr. Early.

"My dear Brother,—I hope you do not consider me to have forgotten you, though I have neglected to write. I never can forget you or your family; and if I can make no other return for your kindness, I will acknowledge it and pray for you. When I say this, it is not for 'saying's sake,' but because I do indeed feel deeply interested in your welfare and the cause at Witney. You have no doubt heard from Mr. J. M. something about my present circuit. Everything here is quite in its infancy. A great proportion of the members young in the way; but many of them appear to be the subjects of piety that is not only genuine but deep. Many witnesses that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. A very excellent select band. I live six miles from Sherborne, and am this side of the circuit three weeks out of the four; so that the superintendence of this part devolves almost entirely on me. Yeovil society is considerably larger than Sherborne. There has been a good work in some parts of the circuit, and though it had received a little check and suffered declension, I trust it is reviving again. At the giving tickets we found seventeen members less than were returned at Conference, but I hope we shall soon have such an increase as shall cause the numbers to overflow. We have had many tokens for good;—some blessed and powerful meetings. But I want to see souls saved at every meeting. Here is an extensive field. We abound in sectarianism, but not in real and practical piety. Here are Baptists, Independents, and Friends, the Socinians, a distinct sect of Antinomians, and an Antinomian clergyman in the church, a disciple of Dr. Hawker. Methodism in the midst of all this is making its way. I am very comfortably accommodated, and the friends are exceedingly kind. The society is mostly poor, and many at present are suffering through depression in the glove trade.

"And how is it, my brother, with you? Is the evidence of adoption bright and clear? You would do well to read carefully Mr. Wesley's sermon on the witness of the Spirit, and those letters in the Magazine

some years ago, occasioned by the review of Cunningham's Sermons. It is very desirable that you should have a strong and satisfactory evidence of adoption. To obtain it, you must believe. He that believeth hath the witness. Do not be reasoning whether your repentance has been deep enough, or whether you are already in a justified state without the assurance of it; but simply believe now, without any reference to what has gone before in your experience.

"Believe that the Father now accepts the Son's atonement on your behalf;—that, therefore, he now accepts you in the Beloved. Trust now, for the present moment, exclusively on the merit of the blood of Christ, and expect an immediate and inward peace. In all the confidence of hope, believe on it now. Believe at all risks, and dare to cry out, 'Lord, I am thine! My God *is* reconciled! Abba, Father! My Lord and my God!' I believe the experience of your dear wife is very like your own, and I would say the same to her. I often pray for you both. May the Lord send the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying 'Abba, Father!'"

The incident narrated in the following letter, may, perhaps, with some provoke a smile; but it must convey to every one a high opinion of the purity of Mr. H's motives, and his complete devotion to the work in which he was engaged.

"Yeovil, December, 1829.

"To Mr. C——.

"You ask me, my dear brother, how I get on? I reply, I am very comfortable in my new circuit, have a kind and jndicious Superintendent, a pious and affectionate people, plenty of work, an extensive field for labour, and a good prospect of success.

"I have lately been in the Bedford circuit, attending Missionary Meetings. Mr. C—— wishes me to come with him next year, but you know I must take to myself a wife first. I believe such a step would contribute to my comfort and spiritual welfare; but I seem to have no time to look around me for such a purpose. I could tell you a curious circumstance on this subject. One of my friends lately recommended and

introduced me to a young lady in an adjoining circuit. Of course, I, on that occasion, merely made my observations. I have since then gone twice; and a few weeks ago, having a leisure day, I thought of paying another visit, and set out for the purpose, half resolving to make proposals. On my way I began to think, is this spending my time in the best manner? It immediately occurred to my mind, there is such a village near Yeovil where there is no Methodist preaching. Will it not be more for the glory of God if I go there, and get a house and preach? I hesitated, then walked on, then stopped again, and at length lifted my heart to God for direction. The desire to go to the village in question became stronger. I resolved to decide by lot, and twice the decision was for preaching. I went, got a house, and we have formed a class. This circumstance unsettled my mind about the lady, so that I have neither had opportunity nor inclination to pay another visit. I trust I shall be directed in every step. I have looked on the foregoing incident as an admonition to proceed with caution, and wait the openings of Providence.

"I have been labouring to get nearer to God, and trust I can say I am making something out in the divine life. I have lately had affecting and almost overpowering discoveries of the love of God, its exuberance and fulness; and I can say—

'O Love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in thee.'

"I trust my dear brother C——— is happy in the exercise of justifying faith, the possession of peace with God. If not, what is the cause? I thought of you last night, when I was preaching from—'O thou of little faith,' &c. After pointing out some of the marks and evils of little faith, as 1, little love; 2, little joy; 3, little strength, &c., &c.; I enquired into the causes: 1, little reading; 2, little prayer; 3, little watchfulness; 4, little self-denial; 5, little sins. But when I came to watchfulness I thought of you; I believe it is not so much a want of reading, or prayer, or want of fervour in prayer, as a want of watchfulness, that is, I mean keeping to

the point, which hinders your spiritual prosperity. I do not imagine you particularly unwatchful in guarding against sin, but in neglecting to watch for the blessing you pray for, and to keep your mind *fixed* here. I have been surprised frequently to hear how suddenly you have gone from the subject, and begun to converse about something very unimportant and foreign to that in hand. Oh! my brother, how can you allow any thing to call off your attention from such a subject. You have, however, continued to preach the gospel, I trust, and will continue to do so. Preach faith until you have it."

The different societies among whom Mr. HENLEY had formerly laboured, retained a lasting place in his recollections, and were ever regarded by him with affectionate interest. This was especially the case where God had given him seals to his ministry. For them he cherished a more than paternal love. In his daily devotions he was wont to enumerate places and individuals by name, interceding distinctly for each: and all his letters breathed the same affectionate anxiety, that they should stand fast in the liberty of the gospel. He not unfrequently addressed communications to such societies in their collective capacity, and several of these "pastoral epistles" have been preserved. The following beautiful specimen of this kind was addressed to a society of whom intelligence of a painful nature had been communicated to him. It is impossible to read the touching and irresistible expostulations which it contains, without being reminded of the tenderness breathed by the Apostle toward his wandering sheep at Galatia; "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you."—Gal. iv., 19, 20.

"Sherborne, 1828.

"To my dear friends at C——. I have long had a wish to write, especially since receiving brother C——'s letter. It is impossible for me to express all I have felt on your account since I left you. Scarcely a day has passed in which my thoughts have not been with you.

'Past scenes my fancy wanders o'er,
And sighs to think they are no more.'

"I have not forgotten the blessed seasons we have had together. Surely the Lord was with us; and notwithstanding all the defects in my labours, I had to rejoice that they were not in vain in the Lord. And, oh! how anxiously have I prayed that all who had set out for the kingdom might persevere, and that if I never met you on earth, I might meet you all in heaven. And shall my rejoicing be in vain?—my prayers unanswered, and my hopes blasted? Oh! how has my soul grieved to hear that some had declined, and gone away backward. For several days after receiving the letter, I wept in secret, and in all my labours I went on heavily: 'for the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt.' Oh! I thought, if I could but go and visit every one of the backsliders, I might persuade the straying sheep to return again to the fold. I thought I would preach from this text, 'Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?' And then I would first remind you all of what God had done for you, the greatness of the cure and the number, and then I would urge the question, 'Where are the nine?' If this should meet the eye, or be read in the hearing of any who have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins, and have returned to the world, let me urge the question on such. Where are you now? Where? In the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity! Where? Sunk in deeper guilt and condemnation! Where? In the broad way! Where? In the power of the adversary, on the brink of eternal ruin! Where are you? You have forsaken the place of refuge, and are now exposed to the threatening storm of divine vengeance. The cloud is lowering over you and gathering blackness. Already the lightning flashes, and soon shall the thunderbolts of heaven burst upon your guilty souls, and furiously hurl you down to the gulf, wide yawning to receive you. You were made whole, but have sinned again, and a worse thing is come upon you, a guilt more heinous, punishment more awful! And what has occasioned all this? Why have you turned back and renounced the Saviour? Was He a hard

Master? Was His service miserable? Were you not happy when in the narrow way? And what have you in return for peace of conscience and the favour of God? Are you happy now? No! no! no! You know you are not. Oh! my dear friends, what hath bewitched you? Yet now listen again to that Saviour whom you have crucified afresh, still expostulating with you—'How shall I give thee up?' 'Return unto me!'

"But, alas! I fear this will reach but few, if any, of those who have turned aside. You only who hold on your way may hear it. You have, my dear friends, no doubt, mourned the declension; but suffer me to be faithful and plain with you. Have you done all you could to guard against it? Have you in the first place continued on full stretch yourselves? Is there that panting after God, that hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that once distinguished many of you. When I was with you, you were resolved to be whole length christians. Are you such now, reckoning yourselves dead indeed unto sin? Are you maintaining close and constant union with the Triune God? If not, you have contributed to the declension! Oh! rouse yourselves, christians—rouse yourselves! Stir yourselves up to take hold of God!

"In the second place. Have you diligently attended all the ordinances of the sanctuary?—Your prayer meetings? Your class meetings? Oh! how many of you have been in your beds when you should have been on your knees, and even on Sunday mornings when you should have been at chapel. Can it be possibly true, that some Sabbath mornings you have had no prayer meetings? No wonder your prayers in the subsequent parts of the day have not been answered.

"Thirdly. If you have been fervent and believing in your meetings and taken heed to yourselves, have you laboured all in your power to prevent declension in others? Have you sought out individually every one, when first any tendency to backsliding had manifested itself? Have you affectionately and repeatedly endeavoured to raise the fallen—to recover the lost—to bring back the wanderer, and to quicken the loiterer? Oh! take care their souls are not required at your

hands. 'Brethren, if any do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall *save a soul from death!*'

"Fourthly. Have you zealously and diligently laboured to bring others to Christ, to fill up the vacancies occasioned by backsliders. Every christian should consider himself a recruiting officer for Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation. Do you, by reproving sin, by persuasion, and by instruction, constantly endeavour to win souls? Let every member amongst you begin and try to gain one soul for Christ this quarter. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God is that you may be saved; and God is my witness how greatly I have longed after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. I know you will bear this plain dealing from me if you love me.

"Fifthly. Have you not fallen into that very erroneous and injurious notion, that revivals cannot be expected to continue—that a declension must be anticipated as a thing of course after a quickening, as the night follows the day, and as the ebbing the flowing of the tide? Nothing is more common than this notion, and I think it a false and dangerous one. I admit that the history of the church furnishes but too many instances of such cases; but it has been owing to man's unfaithfulness and not to God's unwillingness to continue the same influence. The Spirit of God has been grieved and driven away. It was not the design of God that you should have the drops and be disappointed of the shower. The influences of the Spirit, if improved, will be continually increasing. The light shall shine more and more unto the perfect day. The drops shall be followed by the shower—the shower by the torrent; and the torrent continue until

'The earth is o'erflowed,
And the universe filled with the glory of God.!'

"Let me urge you, my dear friends, to examine yourselves on the foregoing particulars; and do not be sitting down complaining, 'Oh! my leanness, my leanness!' but arise and rouse yourselves to the duty of agonizing prayer. Pray you every one apart, and get you every one a fresh baptism from on high. Resolve on being

each for yourselves altogether christians. And then, with your hearts burning as living coals of fire, attend every ordinance; go to your classes, your prayer meetings, your preachings, with your souls panting after God, and breathing heavenward; and having poured out your desires to God, and wrestled and agonized for an outpouring of the Spirit, go then in the name of the Lord, in confident expectation that His Spirit shall be with you, to every backslider; reason with them; warn them; entreat them to return; and continue living to God, labouring for souls, to reclaim the lost, and to provoke one another to love and to good works. And above all, continue in prayer until the Spirit be poured from on high. Now prove me, saith the Lord, and see if I will not pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.'

"Begin immediately. Just now. God is listening. Before you pray, He hears; and whilst you are yet speaking, He will answer. His mercy is not clean gone for ever. Oh! pray, pray! I feel a confidence that He will revive you again, that His people may rejoice. I remain, my dear brethren, your affectionate minister and friend, "J. HENLEY."

While Mr. H. uniformly cherished a truly catholic spirit toward christians of all denominations, he had a peculiar attachment to the established church. In his early days, as has been already remarked, he had a favourable opportunity of entering the ministry within its pale, and this was not abandoned without careful deliberation. It was his practice in subsequent years to attend its services whenever occasion offered, and he frequently expressed himself respecting it in friendly terms. But notwithstanding this, he did not regard the church with unmixed approbation; nor was he ever known to express a wish to be more closely connected with it, or a regret that he belonged to a different body. On the contrary, few had a more clear or conscientious conviction of its numerous errors in doctrine and in practice, or appreciated more sensibly the superior privileges and advantages of the church of which he was a minister. That the separation of the Metho-

dists from the established church was inevitable in its origin and necessary in its continuance, was an opinion which he frequently and strongly expressed; and he often remarked that the connexion could not amalgamate with the church, without abandoning a position of great advantage, and inflicting a serious injury upon the cause of religion. Mr. H. was a sincerely conscientious nonconformist; and while he would not assume an unfriendly attitude toward the church, few could offer more powerful reasons for maintaining a separation from its communion.

The following letter was addressed to one of his friends who had expressed some inclination to enter the ministry of the establishment.

"Yeovil, July 7, 1829.

"My very dear Brother,—I mislaid your letter, or I should have written you earlier. I sincerely rejoice in the improvement of your health, and trust it will be your object and constant endeavour to devote health, strength, time, and talents, *all* to Him,

'To whom your more than all is due'

"I thank God on your behalf for the firm resolutions to this effect contained in your letter. May He help you to keep them! As to the line of conduct you should pursue in order to bring most glory to God, keep humble and simple of heart. Seek the divine direction. Follow the openings of Providence; but take care you do not go before on the one hand, nor be too unwilling to obey the call of God on the other. Do not think to see all the way clear before you. The Lord frequently directs only step by step; but if simple of heart, and with a single eye, you aim at glorifying God in all things,

'You will not full direction need,
Nor miss your providential way.'

"My opinion is unchanged in reference to your going into the church. I think it will be putting yourself under trammels that will very much cramp your usefulness, and laying yourself under obligations to various duties that would, I should think, bear very

hard on the conscience. How could I admit ungodly persons as sponsors at infant baptism, and hear them solemnly promise and vow, &c.? How could I teach children the church catechism? How could I read the burial service over the graves of those who had died in their sins? And yet, how could I avoid these things, if I became a clergyman of the Church of England? You find fault with things amongst the Methodists. Many things are not rightly ordered in your circuit; and so tender is your conscience, that you can hardly engage with cordiality and zeal in doing good. Will you find things better by the change, think you? Is there better discipline, or is the discipline better observed? Is there more piety and simplicity, and less carnal influence? Is there more union and christian love?—more consistency of conduct? And where there has been piety and equal consistency in clergymen, with all the advantages of respect and influence which you imagine to be peculiar to *them*, have they been more useful? Have conversions been more frequent and clear, than amongst the Methodists? And have they the means of preserving and cherishing the good they do, as the Methodists have? I think you must admit they have not. If, during service in church, the Spirit of God should operate in the conversion of sinners, and they in distress should cry for mercy, you dare not have a prayer meeting on their behalf; and whatever gifts may be possessed by lay members for praying or prophesying, you must not employ them; and should your old friend J. H. come to see you, when you get into the Rectory, you dare not ask him to preach for you, and will be obliged to be very cautious how any one knows of your intimacy with the Methodist. Oh! I wonder how you can for a moment think of putting yourself under such trammels. You remark that the church is uncorrupt in precept. If by precept you mean the essential and leading doctrines of christianity, I will admit it. But if you mean in her forms, institutions, laws, catechisms, discipline, orders, &c., and all these must be included in the precepts of a church, then I hesitate not to affirm my honest belief that she has very, very far departed from primitive christianity.

Not long ago, I read Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity—considered the best defence of the constitution of the Church of England ever written; and though I was much pleased and profited with the work, the impression on my mind on finishing it was much more unfavorable for the church than before I read it. On the subject of the Methodistic church government, I recommend you to Mr. Watson's late pamphlet, entituled 'An address to the London South circuit.' My firm persuasion is, that your way of duty is to labour to save souls in the church to which you belong, and in which God has saved you. I trust you will be divinely directed. I am yours affectionately,

"J. H."

During the winter of 1828—29, Mr. HENLEY continued to prosecute his great work with uncommon ardour and zeal; nor was his ministry ever more abundantly successful. Distinctly to enumerate instances in confirmation of this, would extend this volume far beyond its proper limits; though the record could not but be highly gratifying to every enlightened reader. A brief but interesting account of this period, as embodied in a letter addressed to one of his friends at Witney, may, however, not be unacceptable; nor will the subjoined address to his beloved people there, diminish its interest or impair its value.

"Yeovil, January, 1829.

"Mr. B., of Witney.

"It is not from want of affection, my dear brother, but want of time, that I have not written to any of my Witney friends so long. I have received letters from Brothers Purser, Marriott, and Early, and yourself; and I do assure you anything from Witney is valued. I feel a pleasure in the thought that I live in the affections of that dear people, and am deeply interested in their welfare. My sincere and daily prayer is, that the work of the Lord may prosper; and that all those with whom I have sung, and prayed, and held communion, may meet me in heaven. I trust, my dear brother, you are pressing onward through storms and

trials of every kind. I know you and your dear wife have much tribulation to pass through; pain and affliction have been peculiarly your lot. But be faithful, patient, humble, and prayerful; and as your day, so will your strength be. Let every pain, and every trial, and every temptation, drive you nearer to God; and then will these things *all* work together for good. I hope you are both living in the enjoyment of *full salvation*, witnessing that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth you from all sin,' and keeps you ever clean. Be determined never to rest without the constant application of the all-cleansing blood—the constant participation of the divine nature—the constant in-dwelling of the Spirit; and be continually panting after all the fulness of love—of heaven—of God. In order to this, 'live by faith.' Let the actings of faith be as incessant and habitual as the action of the lungs in breathing. *Breathe in God*, and only live to love God; then will you have constant and uninterrupted peace amidst all the world's tribulations; then will you serve God acceptably, and worthily magnify His holy name.

"How is S—— getting on? I hope she has not forgotten and sinned away all the good she received. Does she meet in class? Does she delight in reading, praying, &c.? Is she walking in the narrow way? If so, I hope she will be in earnest, and by her conduct prove a comfort to her parents and an ornament to the profession of christianity. I hope all your children will be found at last at God's right hand. I am sure you desire this. Pray for it, labour for it, wrestle for it with God, and they will be given in answer to your prayers.

Give my kind love to all who ask for me. Tell them I am quite well and happy, getting on in my usual way, blundering and shouting; and the Lord still condescends to give me some fruit. I see souls saved every week, more or less. Glory be to God! On Christmas day we had a glorious lovefeast at Yeovil. Upwards of forty spoke, and so readily one after another that I had repeatedly to say whose turn it was next, for several were waiting. We remained in the chapel until after twelve o'clock. Many found peace.

In several parts of the circuit since then, the power of God has been manifested, killing and making alive, wounding and healing, and completing the work of sanctification in the hearts of the believers. Our covenant meetings, watchnights, and Sunday evening prayer meetings, have been the most remarkably crowned with the converting and saving influence of the Spirit. Last Sunday week, the power of God was felt at Sherborne, and many were enabled to believe. On Sunday, a poor man came fourteen miles, from a place where there is no Methodism, to Yeovil to our preaching, and enquired what he must do to be saved? He had been in deep distress, sometimes bordering on melancholy and despair for three years. A local preacher preached in the afternoon on salvation by faith; after which he went to a class meeting, and whilst they were praying, the Lord set his soul at liberty, and he went home to his house justified.

"As you have requested me to write to my praying friends, I will add a few lines on this sheet, and you may read any part of my letter which you think proper; for I conceive when I am writing to one, I am writing to all, especially with that part of the society with which you are intimate.

"I write, and at the same time fancy I am addressing my dear friends, as they stand around me, in one of their private prayer meetings. So adieu, my dear brother. Yours sincerely, "J. H."

"Yeovil, January, 1829.

"To my dear Witney friends.

"It is impossible for me to express the feelings of my heart towards you. The many happy seasons I have spent with you, and many proofs of affection you gave me whilst I was with you, have left impressions on my mind that *are not, will not,* and, I think, *cannot be* erased. Scarcely a day passes in which I do not think of you. I love you—I pray for you. God is my witness how greatly I have longed after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ. I rejoice to hear that many of you are continuing stedfast in the good way; and I trust you are resolved to urge on and force your pas-

sage to the skies. O consider, the crown is at the end—the crown of glory that fadeth not away! So run that you may obtain. Many of you were on full stretch to be whole-length christians. Are you as zealous now as ever? Are you as fervent and as frequent at the throne of grace in public and in private? Are you proving what is the good and acceptable will of God, even your sanctification? Several were walking in the light and testifying 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin:' is the witness of perfect love as bright as ever? If so, thank God—be watchful—live by faith every moment. Have respect unto all the commandments. Let your light shine. Bear your testimony to what God hath done; but be not satisfied with what you have. Launch out into the deep. Expect greater things. Look for 'the fulness'—all the fulness—be filled with all the fulness of God! Have some of you lost the blessing of perfect love, and again admitted sin into your hearts? How is this? Why have you been unfaithful? Oh! rest not—*rest not* till you regain the unsinning state. What! after having tasted the bliss of perfect love, can you be content to live without it? If I were now in the midst of you, and aware that any of you were in such a state, I should raise my voice to the highest pitch, and shout, '*Rouse yourselves—rouse yourselves—stir yourselves up to take hold of God.*' My prayer on your behalf is contained in 2 Thessalonians, i., 11, 12.

"Some of you had but recently attained forgiveness of sins. I trust you retain the blessing, and wait for all your inward heaven. I am sorry indeed to hear that any have left their first love. Are any of you who read or hear this letter, either amongst the loiterers or backsliders? Oh! permit one who has prayed for you and rejoiced over you, to enquire the cause. Why this declension? Why not as diligent and zealous as formerly? Call to remembrance former days. Were they not happy seasons? Were you not happier when full of love, and life, and zeal? O ye loiterers, 'Remember Lot's wife:' she did not turn back—she only looked back, yet *she perished!* O, if you have grown cold and lukewarm, beware lest you lose all; and now start afresh for God and heaven.

"Backsliders, what have ye done. Why have ye slidden back with a perpetual backsliding? I had hoped to have met you in heaven. Will you not allow me to indulge the hope? Will ye revolt yet more and more, and so all that you have heard and felt, said and done, sink you deeper into a backslider's hell! O repent and do the first works! 'Return unto me, saith the Lord, and I will return unto you.' The Father's bowels yearn over you now. The Saviour, although slighted, still weeps over you, and waits with outstretched arms to receive you. Now the Spirit strives. Return quickly, ere it be too late. May the Lord incline you!

"In conclusion, let me beg you all to be of one heart and of one mind. Unitedly strive to do each other good and to win souls to Christ, and besiege a throne of grace for an outpouring of the Spirit. Let each expect it first in his own soul, and begin just now, and expect it just now. Pray in faith—'*believe* that ye receive it, and ye shall have it.' Pray for the church and the world—pray for your ministers; and oh! pray, pray, pray for your affectionate friend, "J. H."

The very high value which the Editor places on Mr. H.'s correspondence, and which he believes no experienced christian will deem exaggerated, induces him to insert many of his letters, even at the risk of swelling these memorials to a disproportionate size. He trusts however, that they will offer their own apology; and he is persuaded that such as the following need no other.

"Yeovil, February 13, 1829.

"To Mr. and Mrs. Marriott.

"My dear Friends,—I have at length seated myself to do what I have long intended.

"Your letter was welcome indeed to me. Some parts were pleasingly interesting, and some parts painfully so. I sincerely rejoice that you both appear to be growing in grace, and I hope are on full stretch for *all the fulness of God*. May the Lord cleanse and keep you clean; and enlarge and fill your souls with the overwhelming power of saving grace! I have lately had such views of the boundless love of God the Father, ever disposing him to bless;—of the unsearchable riches

of Christ, demanding and meriting all for wretched man;—and the exceeding greatness of the power of the Holy Spirit, which worketh in us; that I have sometimes been almost overwhelmed, and whilst enlarging on this subject in preaching, have been constrained to shout, 'O! the fulness!—O! the fulness!' over, and over, and over; and a responding emotion has been felt, and the people have shouted, 'Glory be to God!' and the Spirit of glory and of God hath rested upon us! O! let us be enlarged! Why are we straitened in ourselves? We have hitherto asked nothing comparatively; let us ask and receive, that our joy may be *full*. O my brother, if you have not yet realized the entire destruction of sin, let me urge you to cry mightily to God. Rest not till he avenge you of your foe. Be thankful that the work is deepening in your soul; but dare to cry out for a complete and immediate salvation. He is able, and willing, and faithful; and He is able, and willing, and faithful, *now*. All things are ready, and now 'Why tarriest thou?' O! venture an act of faith. Believe at all risks. Ever remember that in this, as in justification, the duty is first to believe in order to salvation. Believe that *He will—He doth save*. In all the confidence of hope, claim the blessing now; and then you shall be able to sing,

> "*'Tis done!* Thou dost this moment save,
> With full salvation bless;
> Redemption in Thy blood I have,
> And spotless love and peace.'

"It is unquestionably of importance to you both, that you should be witnesses of full salvation, not only for your own sakes, but for the classes under your care. The more you live to God, the more of that divine teaching will you have, enabling you to distinguish the several cases that come before you, and to give suitable counsel; and the more fully your mind is imbued with hallowing influence, the more highly seasoned with grace will be your speech. It will be with feeling, and the unction of the Holy One will accompany your exhortations; and you will in your class meetings sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

"If my poor prayers will avail, you and your classes

will be blessed. Give my kind love to them, and to all who ask for me. Tell them to live to God, that if ever I should come to Witney again, I may find them following hard after God, and pressing on to glory; but if I see you no more in flesh, may we meet and mingle in the climes of bliss! May God continue to add to your numbers from the ranks of the enemy! Here, glory be to God! we are getting on. Whilst I was preaching on Sunday from John xvii., 18—21, the whole congregation appeared greatly moved; several cried out in the midst of the sermon, and one glorified God aloud for a full salvation. The prayer meeting afterwards continued to a late hour, and long before we left many could rejoice in pardoning love; and so remarkable was the change in some, that instead of strong cries and tears, there was a fulness of joy and songs of deliverance. We had a glorious watchnight the night after; and almost every week we hold one in some part of the circuit: they are attended generally with good.

"I see the necessity of deep piety, consistent conduct, incessant labour, and strong faith, in preachers and leaders especially, in order to usefulness. I feel I come *very, very* short of what I ought to be. I want to be a christian and a christian minister in everything —to be always burning for the glory of God. I bless God I feel a conscious growth in holiness. Pray for me, that I may be holy and useful.

The following is another of those excellent pastoral letters which he was in the habit of addressing to the societies among whom he had gone preaching the kingdom of God.

"Yeovil, February, 1829.

"To the Society at Northleigh.

"My dear Friends,—I promised before I left you that I would sometimes write to you; and I am anxious to know how you are getting on in good things, as many of you were only babes in Christ, just setting out in the good way; and as the adversary, the enemy of souls, is so busy, and frequently so successful in his efforts

'To blast the blooming work of grace,
The heavenly offspring to destroy.'

I have felt very deeply concerned on your account. 'For which cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour have been in vain.' How pleased should I be to know that you were all still with your faces Zionward, and pressing forward to the kingdom. Remember, my dear friends, in order to hold fast what religion you have, you must be adding more. Are you all clear in your experience? Walking in the light of God's favour? Does the Spirit bear witness with your spirits that you are now His children? 'Tis dangerous to live a day without this. What is life? What is the world? Indeed, what is religion without this? Life is a blank, the world a wilderness, and religion a thing of forms, a body without life, or, at best, an unhappy servitude of an unknown God. But with it, life is blissful; the world is a living temple; and religion, in its duties, perfect freedom; and in its enjoyments, heaven begun below. But it is not only the favour of God we are called to enjoy, but His image stamped upon the soul—the nature of God transfused through the soul. Are you, my dear friends, whilst you retain a sense of sins forgiven, looking, praying, agonising, and striving to believe for all your inward heaven? Some of you did enjoy a full salvation; you felt and testified the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; and you feelingly and exultingly sung—

'His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood avails *for me!*'

"Is the evidence, the witness of perfect love, as bright as ever? If so, thank God. Live by faith every moment. Bring forth all the fruits of holiness. Be filled with God; and give all diligence to the full assurance of hope even to the end. But if you have any of you cast away your confidence, O! rest not until you regain it. There is the same God of love the same blood with its all-cleansing efficacy, the same Spirit working all in all, waiting to sanctify you

wholly. Only believe again the same promises. But many of you have never yet realized entire sanctification. Begin, my friends, afresh, in good earnest. See, the prize before you is heaven; but holiness, *spotless holiness*, is the mark. We must be pure in heart to see His face. We must be whole-length christians, or fall short of that land of love. Thousands have lived in the possession of this blessing. O! believe 'that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' you 'shall be saved even as they,' for the Lord putteth 'no difference, purifying your hearts by faith.' Claim, O! claim a full salvation, and claim it now. Why fearest thou? All things are ready. Do you lament the remains of the carnal mind? Are you willing to be clean? Do you believe God can create in you clean hearts? Do you desire it now? Then, do you not believe God hath promised, and is He not faithful? You believe He is able and willing, and He is able and willing now.

'Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees.
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done!'

It shall be done, for God hath spoken the word. Believe He will. Believe He doth. Dare to cry out, 'Lord, I believe!' Risk an act of faith. Just now, whilst you are reading or listening to this, even now believe and struggle into God; so shall you sing—

''Tis done! thou dost this moment save.'

"Perhaps this may be read in the hearing of some poor backsliders, who were once in the way to Zion, but have fallen back, or grown cold or lukewarm. Is it so? What! have any of my friends permitted the enemy to triumph at your fall? O! suffer him not to rejoice over you; but rise and return to Him who still waits with open arms to receive the returning backslider, and who is crying, 'I will heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely.'

"We have had blessed seasons together in the sanctuary, and often whilst bowing at the throne of grace did we realise 'the overwhelming power of saving grace.' Surely the Lord was with us. My soul de-

lights to meditate on those seasons—tears of penitence, cries for mercy, groanings for full salvation, and these giving place to shouts of praise. And oh! how anxiously have I prayed that all who had set out might persevere, that whether I came to see you or else were absent, I might hear of your well doing; and that, should I see you no more on earth, I might meet you all in heaven. If it be my lot to arrive at home in glory first, I shall hail the arrival of my dear friends and at each arrival raise my hallelujah a little higher. Or, should some of my friends go before me, I shall, when I reach it, be looking out for you, to mingle my adoration around the throne of God and the Lamb, with those with whom I have many times joined in humble strains below. I am your affectionate friend and brother in Christ, "J. H."

Mr. HENLEY was by no means ignorant of the errors and evils incidentally connected with extensive revivals of religion. That at such times there is frequently some degree of enthusiasm, and that animal excitement is mixed with the pure fire of the altar, he would often confess and regret. But he condemned the error of those who disapprove of revivals on this account, and oppose a great and certain good for the sake of a minor and accidental evil. To a friend with whom he had frequently discussed this subject, he addressed the following letter:

"Yeovil, February 28th, 1829.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—It has long been my intention to write to you, if for nothing else, yet to shew you that the little difference in our views lessens not my esteem for you, nor the sense of your kindness and friendship towards me.

"I frequently think of our little debates on the subjects of the witness of the Spirit, entire and instantaneous sanctification, believing *now*, &c. And although I am as zealous as ever in advocating these doctrines, and make them as prominent as ever, yet I increasingly see the necessity of caution in my statements to prevent their being misunderstood, and of continually requiring from all who profess freedom from sin, the

practical proofs of it in their lives; and I am free to confess to you that I am not quite so sanguine in my conviction in reference to some who profess to have obtained it. Not that I suspect their sincerity. No doubt they have been greatly blessed when they professed to have obtained perfect love; and at the time they felt no sin: yet in some cases, it was, perhaps, only suspended, not destroyed. But I dare not go with you in supposing that most of those who were young in the way, and who soon gave up their confidence, were so deceived. I think in very many of these instances the work was genuine; but they fell through yielding to temptation, and then gave up their faith. Yet I have seen enough to convince me that some were deceived. But I do not see that the mistake can do any harm, so long as they are properly instructed as to the points and evidences of such a state of experience, and urged to follow on and grasp the blessings still beyond them. Hence I should not think it necessary to intimate my doubt to a person whom I supposed so deceived; but I would be particular in defining to such in a very distinct manner the marks of such a state of grace, and would thus lead the individual to find out his mistake. We have a good number of consistent witnesses of full salvation in this circuit; some in this town, who appear to live in the enjoyment of a more than ordinary degree of sanctifying love. Our band meetings, both here and at Sherborne, are blessed meetings. I go on in my usual manner, and the Lord gives me some little encouragement. We have much new ground to break up, as soon as the season comes for out-door preaching. We have opened three new places since I came, at two of which we have formed societies. Much public attention has lately been called to revivals, and ministers of all denominations are taking up the subject here. But is it not surprising, that in all they have been writing, they have not adverted to modern revivals amongst the Methodists in England? Accounts of American revivals have stirred up the Dissenters here; so that they have entered with some spirit into the observance of days of fasting and special prayer. One of their

ministers attended a lovefeast of ours, and a meeting you would have said it was, for even that Ranter J. H. felt it his duty to request publicly that there might be less noise! I am yours affectionately,

"J. H."

The town and neighbourhood of Yeovil are supported principally by the manufacture of kid gloves; and in this business the larger portion of those who were members of the society were engaged. At this time, owing to the fluctuation of trade and the caprice of fashion, the trade was in a very depressed condition, and many who were dependent upon it were reduced to considerable distress. To alleviate this, as far as in him lay, Mr. H. exerted himself to the utmost. He tenderly sympathised with the suffering poor, and a considerable part of his income was always conscientiously devoted to them; but at this time he made personal sacrifices, in order to enlarge the extent of his charities, and exerted himself to interest the more respectable part of the community in their behalf. But he was far more concerned for the influence which he feared their trials might have upon their spiritual interests, and upon the cause of God; for, unhappily, the instances are too frequent in which deep worldly anxiety tends to damp the fervour of devotion and estrange the soul from heavenly things. In the midst of this, however, Mr. H. was enabled to maintain the same fervent desire for personal conformity to the image of Christ which he had so long cherished. He became increasingly sensible of his own unfaithfulness and deficiencies; while his conceptions of the privileges of a believer in Christ became daily more glorious and exalted. Hence his soul more completely abandoned its own righteousness and strength, and he died to self and sin, while he laid hold more firmly of Christ as his righteousness, his life, and his all. He learned to adopt the language of the Apostle:—"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." And while he was thus striving to live for God, he was not permitted to labour in vain. The

following letters, written about this time, will shew at once the state of his mind and the success of his ministry.

"Yeovil, March, 1829.

"To Mr. M.

* * * * * "Do not imagine that because I write thus I am the subject of anxiety on the matter, so as to permit it to call off my attention from better things. I assure you it seldom occupies my mind. I have no time, and am so engaged in more important work, that I seem to have no thought for those affairs.

"I am striving to be a christian and a christian minister, that I may save myself and those that hear me. I desire never to live a useless day—a useless hour. I want to live to God every moment. O! for a closer union—for more power! I must live for the church. I must live for heaven. I must live for God. I am striving to preach for souls in every sermon. I do not see all that visible good which I desire, because I do not preach in faith as I ought; yet I bless God I have some fruit—some awakenings or conversions every week. Last Sabbath evening, four were brought into liberty in Yeovil, all recently awakened, one of whom cried aloud for mercy in the congregation, whilst I was praying the first time before preaching. Within the last month, upwards of fifty have professed to receive pardon or full redemption, principally in prayer meetings after preaching. I hope my dear brother and sister M. are getting more religion every day. O strive to realize *all the fulness of God!*—the *boundless* love of the Father, the *unsearchable* riches of Christ, the *exceeding greatness* of the power of the Holy Ghost which worketh in us. I have sometimes lately had such overwhelming views of the deep things of God—of the richness, fulness, and exhuberance of *divine love*, whilst preaching on the subject, or pleading it in prayer, that I could only exclaim, 'O the fulness! O the fulness! 'Tis love! 'Tis love!' and the congregation has responded, 'Glory to God!' and 'the Spirit of glory and of God' hath rested upon us. May the fulness of grace here and hereafter be realized by my dear brother and sister, Joseph and Mary, and theirs, and all our friends, and by yours affectionately, "JOHN HENLEY."

"Yeovil, April, 1829.

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—As I am obliged to deny myself the pleasure of coming up to our Jerusalem to the feast, I wish I could, according to your request, send you a letter full of good things. But, though I hope we have not got a famine, ours is not the land of Goshen at present. So you must be content with such as the land will afford. Our people in Yeovil are suffering much, owing to the state of trade, and I fear in spiritual things we are not much more prosperous. We have many blessed quickenings, but there is too much of Reuben's character. I should complain greatly of the people, if there were not a consciousness of so many defects in myself, which inclines me to take much of the blame on my own head. What you say on the importance of making the subjects of '*entire holiness*' and '*simple faith*' prominent in our ministry, I most heartily concur with; and I trust I can say I preach on those subjects, not only as much, but more than ever. I never saw more the necessity of this than now. But oh! how defective am I on the subject of closet devotions. No, my brother, I am ashamed to think, I do not 'spend three hours every day' on my knees in private; and even the little time I do spend in this exercise is frequently so cold and profitless that it is the source of much grief to my soul. I am ashamed of myself that I do not love my closet more. I love the study; I love reading and sermonizing; I love my public duties; I enjoy them; and yet I have so little love to closet devotion. What shall I do? I must take arms against this spiritual sloth. Lord, quicken me! By the grace of God I will start afresh. We had a blessed lovefeast on Good-friday, at Farmer Taylor's, at Merth. Were obliged to stop in the midst of speaking to pray for some in distress. Seven or eight found peace before we finished. The same evening we held a watchnight at Yeovil; and two or three more got into liberty.

"Easter Monday, also, was a glorious day at Sherborne. Lovefeast in the afternoon was rather dull at first; but we had a blessed prayer meeting after, with several backsliders and penitents, which continued till

near chapel time. Some never left the chapel until the watchnight began. Mr.—— is very kind, and though he does not approve of prolonging meetings, &c., and reasons with me now and then about these things, yet lets me go on my own way. I do not know but I have the affections of the people, and they unanimously invited me to stay next year; and when I intimated an inclination to leave, they urged the request so that I could not feel free positively to refuse. Yet I feel rather disposed to wish for a removal, for one or two reasons."

"Yeovil, April 24, 1829.

"To Mr. L.

"My dear Brother,—I have delayed longer than I intended to fulfil my promise of writing. I hoped to have heard from brother C. again before I wrote. I am anxious to know how my C—— friends are getting on. May God bless them, and increase their number and piety! I hope my brother L. is walking in the light, as Christ is in the light. Have you proved the efficacy of His blood to cleanse from all sin? This is the will of God concerning you, that you should 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks; and in order to this, every unholy temper and principle must be rooted out from the heart, and kept out by incessant prayer, constant watchfulness, and, above all, lively and habitual faith—relying every moment on the power and faithfulness of God. I am glad to find you continue to go out to call sinners to repentance. Always aim at the conscience in your exhortations. Let your address always go first to convince every unconverted sinner of his danger and need of a Saviour; and then to point out as clearly as possible the plain, easy, scriptural way of salvation by faith alone—simple faith in Christ. Whatever your theme, never leave off without *pointing* out the way of simple faith, and offering a present salvation, urging the sinner to repent *now*—the penitent to believe *now*—the child of God to claim *now* a full salvation. Pray much before you go out and on your way; and having done your best, retire as soon as you can and offer your service to God in prayer, and there leave it; and whether

you have had a good or a bad time, let it not disturb you, but rest that with God. It is, however, of great importance to your usefulness, that you should live very near to Him—that you should *live* by faith, and be a witness of all His great salvation. Yet be not discouraged from active duties from a consciousness of deficiencies; but be stimulated to increasing diligence to obtain all the image and all the fulness of God. How does the Sunday School go on? Give my love to all the teachers and children; I hope they will be all regular, punctual, and faithful. I was glad to hear from brother C., that so many of the dear children in his class continue steady. I trust they are still determined to persevere in the good way. My love to them especially; and to those who have gone back, say their old friend J. H. entreats them to begin afresh, for he wishes to meet them in heaven, and if they do not, I shall meet them at the bar of God, and shall appear as a swift witness against them. My affection to my many dear friends; I have them all in my mind and on my heart. I pray for them, and hope to meet them in glory. I bless God we have good doing here, but I have many discouragements. Pray for me. I need the help which the prayers of my friends can render me. I beg an interest in the prayers of all. We are endeavouring to extend our borders, and have taken new places on our present plan, hoping and praying that God may 'open the door to preach His word—the great effectual door.' I am yours affectionately,

"JOHN HENLEY."

As the spring advanced, Mr. H. resumed his accustomed labour of preaching out of doors, and for this purpose visited almost every village in his neighbourhood. His reception in some places was discouraging enough, though the people did not (as in his former circuit) resort to open violence. In other places he received a hearty welcome, and permanent good was done. But whether successful or otherwise, he steadily pursued his way; anxious only that he might finish his course with joy, and be clear from the blood of all.

But while thus labouring for the benefit of souls, he

was not exempted from trials arising from another cause. Our Lord forewarned his disciples that, unblameable and useful as they might be, "men would revile them, and persecute them, and say all manner of evil against them falsely for His name's sake;" and painful proof of this it was Mr. HENLEY's lot to experience. Some attempts were at this time made to injure him in public estimation, but on grounds too trivial to deserve more than passing notice. Though he was supported by the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the warm approval of his excellent Superintendent, and by the affectionate esteem of the societies generally, he yet felt this very keenly. He was by no means anxious on his own account, but he was distressed lest the cause of God might suffer through him. However, the trial was but temporary, and his personal excellence and usefulness soon became more manifest than before. The state of his mind at this time will best appear from some extracts from his journal.

"MAY 16.—Have had wave after wave passing over me. 'Deep calleth unto deep.' My mind has suffered much. All manner of evil has been spoken falsely of me. But although in this I am innocent, God has no doubt permitted it to come upon me to prevent a greater evil. But I bless God, in the midst of it I had encouragement. Awakenings and conversions took place. O Lord, arise, and have mercy upon Zion! Have been invited to remain next year; but I feel inclined to move. May God direct me! We have opened several new places, and formed two new societies.

"I have been preaching a good deal in the open air lately; in consequence of which, have preached four times nearly every Sabbath. Last Sunday week preached out of doors in a place that had been given up a year or two ago; whilst enlarging on the ability of Christ to save unto the uttermost, the Lord applied his word with power, and during prayer after sermon cries for mercy were heard; two or three fell down in deep distress; we held a prayer meeting for some time on the spot, and afterwards adjourned to a house. One professed to find peace with God. Fourteen gave

in their names to meet in class. Who of these will stand?

"JUNE 4.—About a month ago I preached out of doors in a new place, and whilst pressing on the people an immediate acceptance of salvation, the Lord crowned the word by signs following; several fell on the ground and cried for mercy; we had a prayer meeting for some time in the open air, and afterwards in an adjoining cottage. In another new place a class of eight was formed a few months since; and we are getting on a little in the circuit generally. We have had to mourn over a few that have gone back, and walked no more with Jesus; yet we have to be thankful that we are gaining ground. Four new members have just joined my class at Yeovil. But I cannot be satisfied. I want to see awakenings and conversions at every meeting. O Lord, revive thy work!

"22.—For some time past have had unshaken confidence in God. Sometimes my heart has overflowed with joy ecstatic and heavenly, but this has not been permanent. In general my state has been less rapturous, but more peaceful and serene. I bless God for a calm and steady confidence—a clear and abiding witness that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Yet I do not seem to feel that power of faith in public duties which I used to do, and do not see that fruit that used to follow my labours when I was enabled to believe for present effects. I think frequently, now I will look for present effects—I will aim at it, and expect it; but do not seem to have the power. How is it? If my heart do not deceive me, I do not pray less; am not less circumspect; my union with God is, I trust, closer and more uninterrupted; I believe I preach a full, free, and present salvation by simple faith, as much as ever and as zealously as ever. Lord, shew me if there be any secret thing with me! Is there the hidden wedge of gold? Shew me, O my Father, if there be a hinderance in me! Perhaps I have not sufficiently acknowledged Thy hand in what Thou hast done. Perhaps I have attached too much importance to my worthless labours; if so, may God forgive me. Or have I been solicitous for usefulness

from selfish views? Have I been influenced by motives of pride in desiring usefulness, for the credit of being useful, rather than for love of God and love of souls. O Lord, forgive and humble me! sink me into nothing in my own estimation, and be thou '*All in all!*' I have lately had much thought in reference to the faith in question—faith for success in the conversion of sinners. Give me correct views! Solve my difficulties! I have thought, perhaps this faith cannot always be exercised, and this power may be withheld without implying any criminal cause of it in the preacher. Jesus Christ was not always successful. The apostles were not always so. Perhaps it is only when God intends to visit a society, a congregation, or a neighbourhood, with a special influence, he may vouchsafe to ministers or others some presentiment, encouraging them to believe; or, at least, the power to believe for great things. And though I would be cautious in admitting this view, lest it originate in a desire to exculpate myself, and lest I carry it too far, and it cramp and straiten me in my prayers and expectations; yet at present it appears to me there must be something in this. Still, I believe much may depend upon the exercise of this power when given—the putting forth the energy when imparted. Many an accepted time has, no doubt, been missed, through not using the faith bestowed; and this power—this special influence, will, doubtless, be more frequently granted, the more we live to God, the more we agonize and wrestle with God for it, and the more it is improved by preachers and people when given. I certainly feel very dissatisfied with the present state of things; and yet I feel I have much cause to be thankful. God has not left us without witness of His power to kill and make alive this last month. Three successive Sabbaths since I last wrote, I administered the Sacrament at Sherborne, Yeovil, and Milborne. The Lord did indeed manifest His presence, and souls were saved.

"On Whit-Sunday, held a lovefeast after preaching at Charlton; a good meeting. Two cried to the Lord, and were delivered.

"On Whit-Monday, a lovefeast at Yeovil; but a re-

turn of my old complaint, sick head-ache, kept me away till three o'clock. Had a blessed meeting, which continued till six. After preaching resumed the lovefeast. A gracious influence rested on the people. Experience sound, clear, and lively. About fifty spoke, many of whom bore testimony that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' At ten, we began to pray, and the power of the Lord descended, and was present to heal the broken in heart, and cleanse the unholy. Several professed to obtain pardon or perfect love. May they hold fast their confidence.

"26.—Our Quarterly fast. Had blessed prayer meetings. The people seem to desire more earnestly and expect more confidently a revival of the work. Is not this the Spirit making intercession according to the will of God?

"28.—At five, out of doors, from Heb. ix., 27—death and judgment. Large and attentive congregation, notwithstanding it rained nearly all the time. A backslider restored."

As the termination of the first year of his residence at Yeovil drew nigh, Mr. HENLEY's mind was considerably exercised in reference to his appointment for the succeeding year. A variety of reasons inclined him to remove; but as he had been earnestly invited to remain a second year, and as this was strongly urged upon him by the people in every part of the circuit, he feared to indulge his own inclinations, lest he might be forsaking the path of duty. The state of things in the circuit was encouraging, though not so prosperous as his ardent spirit desired; and many united with him in fervent supplications for a more glorious manifestation of the presence and power of the Most High.

About this time, after much prayer for divine guidance, he commenced a correspondence with the lady who ultimately became his wife, and now deplores his loss. This connexion, in which he frequently acknowledged the guiding hand of Providence, and to which much of the happiness of his after life was attributable, formed an additional reason for his leaving his circuit at the end of the year: but his wishes were ultimately overruled, and at the meeting of the Conference he was a second time stationed at Sherborne.

Solemnizing anew, therefore, his covenant with God, he entered upon his arduous engagements; and both to himself and to the people it was a year worthy of being remembered for good.

"SEPTEMBER 1.—Reading Brainerd's life. What a devoted, holy, humble man! Why am I not more like him? Oh! how am I ashamed when I think of Brainerd, Bramwell, Stoner, Fletcher, &c. Lord, quicken me! I bless God I am, I think, getting nearer to Him. I have been much blessed and quickened by a conversation with Mr. E. He seems resolved to regain his first love."

Extracts from several letters of nearly this date are subjoined, and will, it is believed, be read with interest and profit.

"Yeovil, September, 6.

"To a Friend.

"Have just returned from preaching at Long Benton. 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification.' The Lord gave me liberty and power. Several appeared affected. My soul was quickened. I had a fresh baptism of the blood which cleanseth from all unrighteousness. Glory be to God! O let us wrestle and pray for all God's great salvation! Go, plunge afresh into the purple flood, and rise into the life of God. You say a great deal about your ignorance of the method of obtaining it, and express a desire for a great deal of instruction, as though it were something very difficult. All that is necessary to be understood is very plain:—simply, your heart is polluted; God hath promised to cleanse it, if you believe, that is, if you believe that He will—that He will *now*—and that *He doth*. 'What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe *that ye receive them*, and ye *shall have them*;' that is, believe that ye are actually now receiving, for God hath said, 'Before they call I will hear, and whilst they are yet speaking I will answer.' Read Wesley's sermon on the scriptural way of salvation, and Fletcher's letter to Miss Hatton, on faith. Do not reason about whether you are prepared to receive so great a blessing. Is it to be obtained by *faith alone?* Then 'Fear not, only believe.' God will Himself prepare

the place; 'only believe.' O! take Him at His word. 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved.' Acknowledge your helplessness, and take hold of His strength. He shall put strength in you. Strive to say,

'His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for *me!*'

"Do not undervalue what God has done for you. Is it a little thing to be a child of God?—to stand accepted in the beloved?—to know Jesus is yours? Rightly estimate your present privilege. Do not throw away the faith you have, because it is not so large a measure as you desire. We had a glorious lovefeast last night: four obtained pardon, and three or four full salvation. I trust a fire was kindled which will not go out again. O that all may catch the flame! Had a profitable Sabbath yesterday, and was specially assisted. The Spirit of glory and of God rested upon the congregation.

"October, 1829.

"To the same.

"Allow me to caution you to be on your watch tower. Company, even of the best kind, will lead to dissipation. Intellectual society is certainly to be prized; and yet, unless there is very much religion, how frequently is God lost sight of in the social circle; and why? Surely it need not be so. Religion is not barren, but presents topics of the noblest kind to the most highly cultivated mind. But I have many times left society where I have had a mental feast, but alas! a spiritual famine has followed. To remedy this, it is not necessary to forsake such society, but to be very watchful. Guard against the spirit of levity. The seriousness becoming those who are conscious of the divine presence, and who are candidates for eternity, need not interrupt the cheerfulness of the christian.

"Do you get to enjoy the closet? O! the closet! How do I feel ashamed before God that I have so little life and power in the closet. I have lately had such views of the narrow and more excellent way, which it is the duty and privilege of every christian to walk in, that I am humbled in the dust, I am so far in the back

ground. I do nothing as I ought, as I might. O let us taste—

'The bliss of those that fully dwell,
Fully in God believe;
'Tis more than angel tongue can tell,
Or angel mind conceive.'

"O to dwell in God! To bask in the sun-light of His face! To feel every emotion of the heart Godward, every affection hallowed, every temper Christlike. Then will every word be seasoned with grace, and every action be acceptable to Him, whose smile and approbation on all we feel and all we are shall constitute a constant heaven on earth.

"My plan is, if I am not drawn out in prayer, still to keep on my knees and read the scriptures. If we seem to have nothing to say to God, let us hear what God will say to us. Stated times for prayer are necessary; though there may be those whose habits of devotion are such that they need no rules. There have been seasons when I have been obliged to force myself, resolving not to leave a throne of grace without a blessing; and I, too, have placed my watch before me, so that your case is not a singular one."

"Yeovil, November 10, 1829.

"To Mr.——.

"My old and faithful friend——has, I suppose, set me down in his black book for not writing before, but it was owing to an idea on my mind that you were in my debt. If, however, I have been guilty of the sin of omission, I am now practically repenting, and hope you will forgive the past.

"I am going on my regular routine of duty, without much news to communicate. I believe I am in my place, and doing my work—the work for which I am sent into the world; but with a great many defects as to method and spirit—with much insufficiency, of which I was never more sensible than I am at present. Yet God favours me with liberty and peace, and some little fruit. I have not the happiness to see the work prospering as in my last circuit; but the Lord is with us, and instances of power of the gospel to save, take place from time to time. But thousands, even

here, never go to a place of worship on the Sabbath: these immortal, blood-bought souls, are perishing in their sins—dropping quickly into hell. What a sight for a feeling heart!

"How are good things with you, my brother? Have you yet regained your first love? I need not tell you God 'has somewhat against you.' Your friendship with the world, my dear brother, and your conformity in many little things, will, if you are not aware, *ruin you.* Already you are robbed of the enjoyment of religion—of the life and power of godliness. I know the readiness and liberality with which you support the cause of God; but let your old and faithful friend J. H. warn you to look to yourself, that you lose not your reward. 'Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God.' The enemy of souls has been long striving to build a bridge between the church and the world, and I fear he has succeeded too well. How many professors of religion are there making free and frequent use of it. There is prevalent a chameleon-like religion, taking the colour of surrounding objects: but this, my dear brother, will never do. We must be whole-length christians, or be shut out of heaven. My dear brother, bear with me: my heart's desire and prayer for you is, that you may be saved with all the power of an endless life. O let me urge you, by your love for the cause of God—by your dread of hell, and hope of heaven—by your sense of obligation to God, who hath dealt bountifully with you;—give yourself afresh to Him. Turn yourself from carnal connexions. 'Come out from among them, be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.' Cut off the right hand sin; pluck out the right eye. Awake, my brother, awake! Arise, and shake yourself from the dust. With holy violence besiege a throne of grace. Wrestle, and fight, and pray, until you retake the kingdom: then will you glorify God by serving His cause, and when He shall come to call you to account, He will say—'*Well done!*'

"You have heard, I suppose, of my taking some steps towards the 'holy land.' What I have done I trust has been done in the fear of God; and I believe

I shall have cause to bless Him, who has been the guide of my youth, frequently frustrating my own plans, and disappointing my hopes, to accomplish 'some better thing for me.'

"My kind regards to Mrs. —— and the children. Write soon, and assure me that you can bear with all this plain-dealing from your sincere and faithful friend, "JOHN HENLEY."

The remainder of this year was spent, as usual, in the untiring prosecution of his laborious duties; and cheered by encouraging tokens of the approval and blessing of God. In two of the country places, where chapels had been recently erected, the congregations were already too large to be conveniently accommodated; and measures were taken to erect new chapels in other parts of the circuit. The piety of the members generally was deep and consistent. Some experienced the power of Christ to cleanse from all unrighteousness, and could reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin; while many more could bear a clear testimony as to the exercise and enjoyment of justifying faith. Few meetings were held without good being done, and the people maintained a spirit of prayer and of humble trust in God. Yet as this period was only remarkable for the uniform perseverance with which Mr. H. pursued his zealous exertions, and for the steady progress of the good work of God in the circuit, it is deemed desirable, for the sake of brevity, to curtail the extracts from his papers. The following selections from letters, &c., will, however, be read with interest.

"Yeovil, March 2nd, 1830.

"Rev. ——.

"Most cheerfully, my dear brother M——, did I pay the ninepence for your letter on looking at its post-mark, and I hope you will often allow me that pleasure.

"I sincerely rejoice to hear of your welfare. As to your request to succeed you next year, though I wish not to shrink from anything in the way of duty and divine appointment, yet I certainly should not for my-

self make choice of a single station. I should much rather be free from the cares and responsibility of the superintendence of a circuit; besides, you very much overrate my talents and underrate your own. I think you have cause for encouragement and much gratitude. Success is not to be calculated merely by the excitement produced, which is frequently but temporary, nor the numbers added; but these in connexion with the general deepening and widening of the work, and an improvement in the state of things in a circuit, are to be all taken into consideration in estimating the good done. I should think you had better stay a third year. I have had another invitation to a similar station, and on the same grounds have declined. Should Conference appoint me, I shall consider it so directed by the great Head of the Church, and take up my cross.

"In my present circuit God has given me favour in the sight of the people; liberty, and power, and some fruit; but nothing equal to what I witnessed in my last. We have added above a hundred new members. I trust, too, our members have been acquiring a stability and solidity of character that is of importance. Yet I doubt not I should have had more fruit, had I lived nearer to God and preached with more faith and feeling. I still resolve, by the grace of God, to 'reckon myself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.' O why do I not live up to the glory of my dispensation? Why may we not 'walk with God' like Enoch—believe like Abraham—endure like Moses—pray like Daniel—love like John—be as bold as Peter—as zealous as Paul? Why not be as holy as Fletcher—as laborious as Wesley—as prayerful as Bramwell? We have the same God—the same High-priest—the same Spirit—the same throne of grace—the same promises. We may be as holy, though not as great. Why may we not have all the mind of Christ? 'May the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you'

"I preach on Saturday evenings at a village near this, where we have formed a nice little society.

"I am looking forward to the next Conference with

feelings different to those of former years, in consequence of expecting to tie the matrimonial knot. I hope it is in the way of Providence, and wish to keep it in its proper place; but have frequently detected a tendency to anxious forebodings, particularly in reference to appointments. In former years I could without the least hesitation say,

'Joined in one spirit to our Head,
Where He appoints, I go;'

And felt as passive as the mote on the surface of the stream; but in the expectation of another to share my weal and woe, I have found it rather difficult to cast away all anxious care."

"March 3rd, 1830.

"MY DEAR BROTHER W——,—Forgive me if I have been long in replying. I have so many correspondents, and yet I dearly love a little pen-chat with distant friends. Well, how have you fixed yourself? or, rather, how has Providence fixed you? Whichever plan is fixed on, I trust you are found in your Providential way. Walk with God. Seek direction of Him, and He will make your path plain. And though there is no impropriety in desiring a situation congenial to the taste and constitution of the mind, as being conducive to comfort and peace; yet the way of divine appointment may sometimes clash with our wishes, to teach us self-denial, and sometimes the discouragement of our plans is to accomplish some better thing for us. In fact, the way of Providence is always the way of safety; and whether our situation be more or less agreeable to our wishes, we shall, if we are faithful, ever find a constant source of happiness in a close walk with God. I was glad to hear of your beginning to labour a little in the Lord's vineyard. It is an important, and at the same time a delightful employment, to unfold the dying love of Christ to perishing sinners, and to press on their acceptance the overtures of mercy. Pray much—study much—read much—write much. Live near to God—walk circumspectly—converse spiritually—seriously—familiarly on divine things; and in humble dependance on divine aid, open your mouth wide,

and God will fill it. In your composition, aim at correctness and clearness rather than ornament. Every sermon should instruct, persuade, and excite. Think, when you are composing, you are speaking to the people; and think, when you are addressing them, there may be some ungodly sinner present who may never hear another sermon, and strive to gain him as though you were sure of this.

"You complain of deadness. It must be by constant watchfulness, unceasing prayer, and habitual recollection, with simple faith in continual exercise, believing for a moment at a time, that uninterrupted union with God must be maintained."

"MARCH 26.—Just returned from five o'clock prayer meeting. Lord, humble me! I feel I have much cause for humility; yes, much to be ashamed of before Thee. I have again and again made a full and unqualified surrender of all I have and am to Thee—time, talent, strength, to Thy service. I bless God that He hath kept me from falling. Have been favoured this quarter with some instances of the saving power of God. O that they were more frequent! My mind has been painfully exercised lately. I will stand on my watch-tower, and wait to see what He shall say unto me.

"MAY 18.—Last week I had a serious accident. The horse, in endeavouring to pass a waggon in the street, became restive, got on the pavement, slipped and came down just as the waggon was passing, the wheel of which passed within a few inches of my head and actually over my hat; but I was mercifully preserved, and only slightly injured.

"I preach four times nearly every Sabbath. Yesterday, between the afternoon and evening services, I took my stand in the market-place. The Scotch Greys being in the town, a great concourse of people had been attracted from the country. I stood on one of their waggons that had no luggage on it, in the midst of two or three hundred people, and proclaimed, 'God so loved the world,' &c. I had much opposition from some, and attention from others: sticks, stones, mud, apples, &c., were thrown from various quarters; but I proceeded, and never felt more self-possession, nor was in the least

fear. I was conscious I was in my Master's work, and they could not go farther than He would allow.

"30.—Went to the house of the Lord with 'a glad heart and free.' I had more than usual liberty in exhorting the people to 'go on unto perfection;' and at the band meeting after preaching, there was a loud and almost general cry for a full and present salvation. Five or six were enabled to believe and enter into

> 'The rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
> And God is loved alone.'"

As the Conference of 1830 approached, Mr. H. prepared to take leave of the Sherborne Circuit. The intelligence was received with general and deep regret. His frank and cordial manners had endeared him to the affections of the people, while the zeal and fidelity of his ministry had commended him to every man's conscience in the sight of God. He was from conviction attached to the discipline of the Wesleyan church, and he steadily and conscientiously observed it. In punctual attention to his appointments, both on the Sabbath and week day, in pastoral duties, in visiting the classes, in instructing the young, in caring for the sick and poor, in promoting the effective operation of Sunday Schools, Tract Societies, and other local charities, and especially in aiding the great Missionary work, his faithfulness and diligence were alike exemplary. But these formed but a part, and frequently but a small part of his engagements. In the intervals of duty on the Sabbath, he generally, when the weather would admit, went into the more densely populated parts of the town, or into some neighbouring village, and preached in the open air; and this he frequently repeated three or four times on the same day. In the chapel, after evening service, he usually held a prayer meeting, in which he would engage twice or more with his wonted ardour and fervency. His excellent taste for music, and his powerful voice, often led him to conduct the singing at such meetings, which his friends regretted as an unnecessary waste of strength; yet from the tasteful and lively manner in which he did it, it was too often left to him. During these meetings his eye frequently wandered

over the assembly, and if he saw any persons evinci distress, he would go to them, give them suitable instructions, and kneeling by them offer up special prayer on their behalf. At other times, persons under conviction of sin were invited to kneel around the communion, while many united to intercede with God for them. One evening a respectable young man happened to be present at a meeting of this kind, who was not only totally unconcerned for himself; but was regarding the scene around him with a feeling closely allied to contempt. Mr. HENLEY at length noticed and spoke to him; and after a few words had passed, he knelt beside and prayed for him. The youth was startled and subdued. He fell on his knees and began to pray for himself. His conscience was stricken with a sense of his guiltiness and danger, and he left the chapel resolving not to rest until he found the mercy of God. The next day Mr. H. hastened to visit him, and found that the good impressions of the preceding evening were remaining, and that he still earnestly desired to become a christian. He soon after accompanied Mr. H. to another meeting in the country, and there he was enabled to exercise faith in Jesus Christ, and rejoiced in the knowledge of the pardon of his sins. Years have since rolled away, but he still retains the comforts of religion, and is a consistent member of the Methodist church.

The usefulness of Mr. HENLEY'S ministry, though not commensurate with the cravings of his ardent spirit, was general and considerable. Scarcely a place in the circuit but was cheered by indications of prosperity; and in every part of it there were some who owed to his instrumentality their conversion to God. It is objected to a more than commonly zealous and exciting ministry, that its results are usually transient and speedily disappear. It may be fearlessly asserted that such was not the case here. Many whose conversion took place in the revival which occurred in the Sherborne Circuit during the ministry of Mr H. and of his excellent predecessor, remain to this day, and have steadily and consistently maintained their christian profession. Prosperity in secular matters, and a spirit of unity within the church, usually attend a season of

spiritual prosperity; and it was eminently so in this instance. The contributions of the societies to the support of the cause of God, and to the several institutions of the connexion, were liberal; and feelings contrary to union and peace were unknown. The disciples "were of one heart and one soul." The memory of their revered and faithful minister will long be cherished with tenderest affection by many of his spiritual children in that neighbourhood; and the results of his labours will appear in the records of heaven, when all the achievements of human wisdom, wealth, and power, shall have for ever passed away.

CHAP. VIII.

"ACCORDING TO MY EARNEST EXPECTATION AND MY HOPE, THAT IN NOTHING I SHALL BE ASHAMED, BUT THAT WITH ALL BOLDNESS, AS ALWAYS, SO NOW ALSO, CHRIST SHALL BE MAGNIFIED IN MY BODY, WHETHER IT BE BY LIFE OR BY DEATH."—PHIL. i., 20.

Mr. Henley at Torquay—Marriage—Lancaster—Doctrine of Sanctification—The Felon—Opposition—Journeys—Extracts—Rev. T. Slugg—Conference—Cholera—Derby—Controversy—Letter to Mrs. H——.—To Mrs. B——.—Journal—Visits Torquay—Family Afflictions—Extracts—Death of his Sister—Cromford—Derby—Witney—Care for the Young—Letter from a young person—Zeal and devotedness. 1830—35.

PREVIOUS to his departure from Yeovil, Mr. HENLEY availed himself of an opportunity to visit his paternal home. His coming thither was always hailed with delight, not only by his own family to whom he was deservedly dear, but by all the Methodist societies in the neighbourhood. It was a striking feature in his character, that his attachments were uniformly sanctified; his aim was ever to do good; and though the society of his friends afforded him inexpressible pleasure, this consideration was almost forgotten in his desire that their intercourse might conduce to their mutual spiritual profit and to the glory of God. He beautifully exemplified the apostolic sentiment:—"I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." On this occasion, both his public labours and his exertions in private were attended with much success. Many were awakened to a concern respecting eternal things, and others were quickened to increasing diligence. The subject of entire sanctification, which was the theme on which he chiefly loved to dwell, excited general attention; some persons even in the higher ranks of society began

to evince an interest in it, and to seek an experimental acquaintance with it. To some interesting instances of this kind, Mr. H. alludes in the following extract from his journal.

"JULY 1.—Again at home—sweet home! On Tuesday, preached at Ottery St. Mary; called on Sir John ——. Miss —— and Miss ——, daughters of Colonel ——, had attended the service the evening before, and wished to converse with me on the subject of christian perfection. They are interesting girls, and, I believe, deeply pious. Sir John gave me £5 towards Yeovil chapel. He is a decided Wesleyan, has Mr. Wesley's works daily read to him, and is, I trust, in earnest in seeking sanctification."

At the Conference Mr. H. was stationed at Lancaster. In this town and its vicinity the societies were at that time less numerous, and the cause in a less prosperous condition, than was common in the north of England. The circuit had recently been divided, but still comprehended a wide extent of country, much of which was mountainous and bleak, so that the journeys were frequently long and fatiguing. As he was the only minister stationed there, the whole duties of the circuit devolved upon himself; and his situation was a sufficiently arduous one. But wherever he had been, he would have laboured with all his might; the amount of his duties at Lancaster, therefore, occasioned him no uneasiness, but he cheerfully entered upon and fulfilled them with his accustomed fidelity and with considerable success.

On the 28th of July in this year, he was married, and soon after removed to Lancaster. In a letter addressed to his beloved and now sorrowing wife, he thus refers to his new appointment:—"The circuit is extensive and laborious; but let us be resolved to give ourselves fully to the Lord. We have both known something of the bliss of loving God. When our hearts are filled with His love, we shall enjoy the highest heaven we can have below, since it is not only a meetness and a title for the inheritance above, but gives a foretaste by which we antedate the joys of our future home. This will hallow and sweeten all domes-

tic enjoyments, and fit us for public usefulness."

The following communication from one of Mr. H.'s friends at Lancaster, which takes in the whole time of his residence there, will be read with interest.

"Mr. HENLEY commenced his labours amongst us on the 29th of August, from John iv., 14. Under that sermon, we were all greatly blessed, and felt confident that the Lord would make him an instrument of good. He announced that he should treat on the doctrine of sanctification on the following evening, which he did from 2 Cor. xiii., 9—'And this also we wish, even your perfection.' From this text he preached four sermons; and great was the sensation produced in Lancaster by their delivery. The different churches hearing of this strange doctrine, as they called it, came to hear. Many were convinced of the necessity of seeking after the blessing; but others, and not a few, said, it was next to impossible to live in the enjoyment of it; but that if it were attainable, the Lord would bestow it just before death. Indeed, much opposition was raised; but fearless of all, Mr. HENLEY preached the doctrines of the cross, fully and faithfully. He also urged our particular attention to the Quarterly Fasts, and attendant services, for the especial purpose of praying for a revival of the work of God; and five o'clock morning prayer meetings were established, at which he would frequently give us a short sermon. Much surprise was manifested when these measures were first proposed; but they proved the means of much profit. About this time, we had in our county prison a felon condemned for murder; and previous to his execution, and indeed on the morning of his death, our faithful and sympathizing minister had a very early prayer meeting, to entreat the Lord to save the soul of that unhappy man. Never shall I forget that season. God was present to do us good, and such an effect was produced in the town, on hearing of it, that many came to our chapel afterwards, and from that very time the work revived among us.

"In the neighbouring villages, wherever we had no society, Mr. HENLEY began out-door preaching. At P——, we had great opposition. On one occasion we

had no sooner finished singing and prayer, than a lawyer, employed by the clergyman of the place, came up, and threatened to imprison Mr. H. if he did not leave the place at once; but the people would not hear of this, and some of them were so enraged, that it became necessary for Mr. H. to interfere and entreat them to let the young man go, or they would have thrown him into the river. After this, that clergyman meddled with us no more. Indeed Mr. H. was not a man to be disheartened with trifles, or he would have been so many times during his stay in Lancaster.

"His manner of conducting lovefeasts was peculiarly happy. That which was held on the first Christmas of his coming amongst us, was a very gracious one. The power of the Lord was felt in an extraordinary manner. While a poor afflicted girl, who had been made happy in God under Mr. H.'s ministry, was speaking, the sacred influence was truly overwhelming; many cried out for pardon and were healed, and six backsliders were reclaimed, who had come some miles to the feast. The poor girl above named died soon after in the full triumph of faith; and now she is doubtless praising the Lord along with her dear minister in heaven. I do not recollect a lovefeast in which souls were not saved, during the two years Mr. H. was with us, and I attended them all.

"Band meetings he much delighted in, and I never knew him absent on these occasions. I have sometimes seen him in such an agony of soul as words cannot describe, when praying for the conversion of sinners. At these meetings we did truly enjoy christian fellowship;

'And if our fellowship below,
In Jesus be so sweet;
What heights of rapture shall we know,
When round His throne we meet!'

"With regard to the journeys in this circuit, I may say a little, as it was not unfrequently my happiness to be his companion. They were often long and fatiguing, and there was little local help for a minister. One place was supplied on a Sabbath afternoon; and after Mr. HENLEY had preached in Lancaster in the morning I have sometimes accompanied him there. The road

was very rough, and some of the hills were a mile in length. Here he would preach, and often renew tickets or lead a class, and return and be in Lancaster pulpit again at six o'clock. On one occasion, in the depth of winter, when the snow was on the ground, we set off on this journey, and with great difficulty got half way, but could proceed no further. Mr. H., however, was not satisfied, and calling at a farm house he borrowed a horse, and set out a second time; and though it was no easy thing, he accomplished the journey, and on his return preached at the farm house, and reached Lancaster late at night. At another time, he had on the Saturday evening asked me to go with him to this same place, saying, he would preach a short sermon in the morning that we might set out early; but he was so carried out during the service, that time passed unperceived. While preaching, the clouds gathered blackness, and when uttering these words in his sermon, 'Hast thou an arm like God, or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?' the lightning flashed and the thunder pealed awfully so that all the congregation were alarmed. We set out in the midst of the storm immediately, after taking some refreshment; and as we were ascending a long hill, about three miles from the town, the rain fell in torrents. Thoroughly wet through, we took shelter in a small hut in a field, when came the loudest thunder I ever heard, and what is called a thunderbolt fell a little distance from us. When the rain a little subsided, we proceeded to the place, and Mr. H. preached and gave tickets. On returning, we literally had to run and walk by turns, in order to reach Lancaster in time for preaching. Mr. H. was in the pulpit at a quarter after six, and after the service he held a prayer meeting. He had other journeys, of even greater length than this, often going out from ten to thirteen miles on foot, and returning home after preaching, which he would not sometimes accomplish till long after midnight, as the preaching did not commence until eight o'clock. In many parts of the circuit I have been with him when souls have been in distress, and nothing would induce him to leave them till they had found peace with God, and then he would return, singing and praising his Heavenly Father all the way home.

"Mr. HENLEY was very clear on doctrinal points and in defining and distinguishing the truth, so that I have never heard a minister so easy to be understood. He made the way appear very plain to the seeker of salvation; and many through him were made the happy partakers of the blessing of sanctification, which, to use his favourite words, was 'the more excellent way.' Many seals to his ministry have died in the faith, and are now stars in the crown of his rejoicing before the Lamb.

"Frequently, after he had pronounced the benediction, as though unable to leave us, he would say, 'Now sit down;' and with a smile beaming on his countenance he would add, 'You that can say of a truth that God for Christ's sake hath pardoned your sins by faith in his blood, stand up;' and then he would encourage us until our hearts were all on fire, and one and another would shout, 'Glory to God!' Then he would request those who had not attained a sense of acceptance to stand up, and affectionately point them to the Lamb of God. By this means many were saved.

"Thus he laboured with us for two years with great success and dearly beloved by us all. I have travelled with him some hundreds of miles, and every journey was an unspeakable pleasure to me, though frequently we returned home much fatigued. His farewell services were like all before, full of faithfulness and affection. Such a parting I never before witnessed. The people seemed as though they could not let him go. Truly he was a man of God, and wise to win souls to Christ."

The following extracts from letters written during this period will not be unacceptable:—

"We have much cause for gratitude. God is reviving His work. We have added since Conference, including those on trial, above a hundred—that is, in the circuit. My week-day work is laborious; a great deal of walking. But I bless God I have my health, and am happy in my work, and God gives me success, not indeed to that extent which I could wish, nor to the extent which I believe I should realize did I live to Him as I ought. I am frequently warmed and quickened,

and my love is enflamed; but, alas! it is not constant and steady as it should be. I want to be able to say—

'I always for Thy glory burn;
I always see Thy face.'

I want more faith—more power—simplicity—zeal, and wisdom. O! to be 'a burning and a shining light.' We have opened five new preaching places since I came, and have now taken four more on the plan to be tried this quarter. There is a great deal of barren waste in the neighbourhood, needing spiritual culture. I had long wished to get into the north of England, hoping to be placed in some favoured spot; but God saw, no doubt, that this was the place for which I am best adapted. I am persuaded I am in my place, and if God make me useful I will rejoice."

"April, 1832.

"To——.

"I know not what to say to the proposal about—— for next year. There are many reasons which would made it very pleasant to me to comply with the request; but there are others which make me hesitate. The idea of becoming Superintendent among my own acquaintance does not seem to sit easy upon me; having but yesterday, so to speak, been quite a child among many of them, so soon to come in such a character appears rather unseemly. And then I would prefer being free from the responsibility and care of a Superintendent.

"But, how do you get on in your work? Do you yet feel at home in the great chapel? The power and grace of God to support are sufficient. Choose plain texts, and aim at preaching pointedly to the consciences of your hearers: at the same time, when you address particular characters, endeavour to distinguish and classify them, that you may neither offend on the one hand, nor flatter on the other.

"You will smile, perhaps, at my inconsistency, if I caution you against preaching too long; yet I think you need that caution. I am improving in that respect, or trying to do so. I preached out of doors yesterday, and hope to repeat this often during summer."

"To Mr. C——.

"I have been invited to stay a third year, but have not consented. I have had two years of hard work, a great deal of preaching and walking, all the care of the circuit, with much pastoral duty.

"I have had encouragement certainly; God has given me favour in the sight of the people, and fruit to my labours. Our numbers have increased since I came, from two hundred and seventy five to four hundred and twenty, beside about thirty on trial. We have had a gracious revival in some parts of the circuit, a considerable increase in our congregations, and several new places on our plan. The friends are very pressing for me to remain; but I have had to preach so much to the same congregation, that I feel it would be wrong to comply, unless I had more time to study. Where I shall go next, I cannot tell. I have had several invitations, but have not given any pledge. You have probably heard of the general prosperity of Methodism in the north. In one circuit five hundred were added in six weeks. Praise the Lord!

"I hope you are happy in your own soul, and labouring to be useful. Have you taken to yourself the comfort of those doctrines of faith I have heard you so clearly explain? I hope you have. With reference to myself, I still live by faith, although, when I think of my unfaithfulness, I wonder at myself that I can continue to believe as I do, and am sometimes afraid my faith is nothing but presumption; yet I dare not give it up. If I give up my confidence, I am shorn of my strength; but I bless God I can and do believe, and am saved indeed."

The Rev. T. Slugg, who travelled in an adjoining circuit, and occasionally exchanged pulpits with Mr. H., thus speaks of him during this period:—

"During my two years' interchange with Mr. HENLEY at Lancaster, I was led to form a very high opinion of him, as a holy, zealous, laborious, and successful minister of Christ. He always appeared to be in the *spirit* of his work, and never so much in his element as when preaching, praying, singing, or talking on the deep things of God. A sacred unction attended his ministry. Many sinners were awakened and converted, and believers built up and established. This was the great

object ever before him—to save souls; and his work was not in vain in the Lord. He lived near to God by constant prayer and living purifying faith."

In July, 1832, he attended the Conference in Liverpool. He had been out of health for some time; and although he had not missed an appointment, yet he ought frequently to have been in bed when he was in the pulpit. Only the day before he left home for Liverpool, he was so extremely ill, that from fatigue and weakness he fainted and fell as he was crossing the study to go to his room, and for nearly a quarter of an hour he was quite insensible; yet within an hour after, he was in his work and preaching.

It was during this Conference that the cholera raged so alarmingly throughout England, and especially in the North. The preservation of the preachers during the assembly of the Conference was matter of devout acknowledgment. In a letter written from Liverpool, Mr. H. says:—"The cholera is somewhat subsiding. I am, through mercy, better. I have not heard of the illness of one preacher yet. We had a charming sermon from Mr. Watson last night. Dr. Clarke is very active in the Conference."

This year he was appointed to labour in Derby; and on the 29th of August he went there, leaving (in consequence of illness) part of his family behind.

In a letter of the 30th, he says:—

"We reached Derby in safety yesterday. The ride from Buxton was delightful; there are not the lakes of our late neighbourhood, but the river and woods are rich in beauty; and the scenery altogether surpasses description." And then he adds, after speaking of the disease in question—"Why should we fear? God will preserve us. He is my Father and your Father; my God and your God; the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and Christ is our High Priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities—a sympathizing High Priest. O let us trust in Him! *Let us trust in Him!*

"Dr. Clarke is dead. One of the brightest stars gone out—nay, but 'melted away into the light of heaven.' What a loss to the connexion!

"God bless you, and keep you."

Mr. HENLEY received his appointment to Derby with feelings of pleasure, not unmixed with anxiety. That circuit had been much disturbed during the preceding year by a controversy on points of doctrine, respecting which novel and peculiar ideas had been imbibed by a part of the society. The precise nature of justifying faith, and the mode of its exercise, were the subjects to which these opinions related; and while their divergence from the orthodox standard was, perhaps, very slight in the first instance, they were expressed in language so unguarded, and maintained in spite of consequences so obvious and so unscriptural, as to involve many in dangerous practical error, and to call forth from those who were not infected by them the most determined opposition. The consequence was the separation of the church into parties, and ultimately the secession from it of those by whom these novelties were embraced.

To heal the wound thus inflicted, was the object to which the serious attention of the Conference of 1832 was directed; and after recording their deliberate judgment upon the point at issue, they selected such ministers for the circuit as were believed to be fitted to allay the unhallowed excitement under which it laboured, and to restore its wonted prosperity. The Rev. Messrs. Hope and Bytheway, along with Mr. Henley, were nominated for this important service. That Mr. H. was admirably adapted to the emergency which led to his appointment cannot be questioned. His undoubted and deep piety—his fervent zeal—his unwearied fidelity in pastoral labours—his theological accuracy—his affectionate spirit—and his yearning love for souls, each and every quality by which he was distinguished, conspired to confer upon him peculiar fitness for the sphere to which he was called, and the duties which were required of him. He was, indeed, himself far from satisfied that he possessed the requisite qualification, while he shrank from encountering the evils to which dissensions in the church never fail to give rise. But his path of duty was plainly indicated, and he willingly acquiesced in the wishes of his brethren that he should labour at Derby.

The sound discretion which governed his conduct on his arrival in his circuit, awakened in the bosoms of all, high expectation of his usefulness. While he took care accurately to acquaint himself with the questions at issue, he avoided unnecessary controversy. Whenever truth would admit of it, he threw over the errors of the mistaken a mantle of charity; and when encountered by strenuous prejudice, he would substitute devotion for discussion, and, taking his opponent with him to the throne of grace, he would earnestly implore the effusion of that holy influence, which causes all hearts to melt and flow together in unity and love. In concert with his judicious and excellent colleagues, he aimed to hush to rest the war of conflicting opinions, and to animate every bosom to fight the good fight of faith. The effects were soon and extensively witnessed. The acerbity of controversy disappeared; many who had backslidden, were restored; some who had seceded, returned to the church; and sinners were savingly converted to God.

Some extracts from his journal and letters of this period, are subjoined.

"DERBY, SEPTEMBER 3.—Preached at Green Hill for the first time, John i., 3. I find all the lively people are not gone away with the seceders. Preached at King-street with much liberty from Col. i., 27, 28, and baptized seven children."

To Mrs. Henley he thus writes:—

"Let us look up and expect good from that kind Parent who hath done us good and not evil all our days. Surely, surely we have cause to love Him, and encouragement to trust Him for all He hath promised; and O! let us strive that when we meet we may have to tell each other of a great increase of the life and power and blessedness of religion in our souls. I long to get nearer to God—to enjoy more of the power and blessedness of religion, that I may be made a blessing. I have been giving the people my notions of faith, and both parties seem to say they agree to my statements. I conceive the controversy has been more about words than things. Some of the seceders have, no doubt, in their zeal and warmth, been very unguarded and some-

times extravagant in their expressions. However, they are gone; we only wish some of the best of them back again, and many who remain are of the excellent of the earth."

"September, 1832.

"To Mrs. B.

"I hope you are getting to love your new minister as much as you did your old one; and your old friend and pastor will not forget to pray that your present ministry may be much more profitable, both to you and the people generally, than mine was. That God did make me an instrument of some good among you, I had satisfactory evidence, and I wish that good to be permanent. I hope to see all the fruit of it in another world; and hence, if there were no other reasons, I earnestly wish and fervently pray that my successor may be made a blessing. I trust my dear Mrs. B. is living in the enjoyment of a *full salvation* from sin, with the evidence as bright as ever. O, never be satisfied to spend a day without the perfect love of God! You have tasted the bliss of loving him alone: you have felt something of the happiness and hallowing influence of sanctifying love. Be not content to live without it. If you ever lose it through unwatchfulness or unbelief, strive for it again—pray, agonize, believe again. Thus going again to the same fountain, the blood which cleanseth from all sin will be applied afresh, in all its saving efficacy. And to prevent falling from that state of blessedness, aim at rising higher and higher every day. God has done much for you, but He waits to do more. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all you ask or think. May he fill you with his fulness, and keep you to the end! If we meet no more on earth, we shall, if faithful, meet in glory. O let us live for this—hope for this—believe for this! Believe me yours very affectionately,

"J. H."

The following extract relates to this period, and concludes his journal.

"Nov. 8.—Just finished reading the life of the Rev. John Smith. He was evidently a very honoured instrument in the hands of God in doing good. His piety

was unquestionably deep and genuine. O for more of his spirit—his simplicity, zeal, power, faith! My soul has been quickened and fired whilst reading the account, and I hope to be more devoted. I must be more on my knees, and more fervent in my prayers. I owe it to the church and to the world as a public character. I do ardently long to be useful—to save souls—to spread the Redeemer's honour.

'I would my precious time redeem,
And longer live for this alone.'

"10.—Our little Mariana baptized by Mr. Newton. A solemn time. May the great Head of the church assist us as parents to discharge the engagement devolving upon us; and may the dear girl live to love and fear God, and at length be a member of the church triumphant!"

From the last date, Mr. HENLEY kept no journal; occasionally he penned a few remarks on a slip of paper, but these were generally destroyed, and had not Mrs. Henley preserved the other, it also would have been committed to the flames.

In March, 1833, Mr. H. again visited Torquay, but under circumstances of a most afflicting nature. Since he last left it, the family circle had been invaded by death; his brother Richard to whom he was much attached, having exchanged mortality for life, after a long illness. One of his sisters was now seriously indisposed. Another brother was about to leave England in order to settle in America; and his venerable and excellent father was suffering, in addition to all this, from loss of a pecuniary nature, which was almost ruinous. Having been induced to render an important service to an individual, he found, when too late, that his confidence was misplaced and abused, and that he had lost nearly all he possessed. Under these distressing circumstances, Mr. H. went home to endeavour to allay the sufferings of his parents, and to minister that consolation of which they stood so much in need. It was a painful visit; and the distress which he sought to alleviate in the minds of others, well nigh overwhelmed his own.

"Torquay, March 22nd, 1833.

"Found all well but Eliza, who is seriously indisposed. I cannot describe to you my feelings on my dear father's account. On hearing what he has had to pass through, my soul has been almost overwhelmed, and still all is not over. How it will end is doubtful. I will tell you particulars when we meet. It requires faith to reconcile all this with the attributes of Deity and the doctrine of Providence; but yet all is, *must be well:* God *cannot* err, *cannot* do wrong."

Amid the pressure of the domestic calamities to which allusion has been made, Mr. H. had the comfort of witnessing some degree of success in his ministerial labours. His preaching was generally acceptable to the hearers; and while his perspicuous and forcible enunciation of the truth as it is in Jesus tended to silence controversy, the unction of the Spirit, which accompanied the word, gave it effect. A better state of feeling was gradually developed throughout the circuit, and believing expectations were cherished of brighter and better days. To this improved state of things, he thus alludes in a letter to a friend:—

"June 20th, 1833.

"To ——.

"We are doing tolerably well. We have peace in all our borders, and some little prosperity. Several have recently realized a higher salvation, and a few awakenings and conversions have taken place.

"After all, vital religion is the chief thing. I am persuaded that deep piety is of very great importance to a preacher's comfort as well as usefulness. Experimental and practical preaching, accompanied with the unction of the Holy One, will always be both acceptable and useful: and I am sure that the nearer we live to God the more experimental our preaching will be. I have been striving lately to get more of the mind of Christ, and to walk more closely with God; but, when preaching on the deep things of God, and urging the people to walk in 'the more excellent way.' I feel ashamed of my own deficiency in this respect."

"September 10th, 1833.

"To ——.

"Yours found me at Loughborough, and I only reached home half-an-hour before I had to leave again for Cromford. Let us be encouraged by the consideration that we are all in the hands of our Heavenly Father, whose wisdom and kindness are unbounded; and, with the assurance that these will be exercised on our behalf, let us cast every care upon 'Him who *careth for us*,' How consoling and satisfactory the assurance that Jehovah, the God of Providence and of grace, interests himself in all that concerns us. O! let us 'trust in the Lord at all times, and pour out our hearts before Him.' I have been very poorly from over fatigue, but am now 'quite better,' as they say in Lancashire. Preached last night, at King-street, from James v. 20. A large congregation, and a very gracious feeling. Three persons found peace with God at the prayer meeting. To God be the glory!

"Let us pray much for each other whilst separated, and let us strive that we may meet each other with an increase of vital religion. Keep up family prayer wherever you may be. Take up your cross: it will be much better to bear it than to shun it."

To his brother William he writes on the 25th:—

"I am glad you are comfortable in your new circuit. You must preach and pray, labour, live, and believe for an outpouring of the Spirit, and the work will be sure to revive. Only be humble and holy, studious and diligent, and preach a present salvation by simple faith, and you have nothing to fear.

"We have had a little stirring here. Last Sunday week, we had a powerful meeting at King-street at night;—three conversions: and on the Monday preceding two obtained sanctification at the same chapel. I hope I am getting on a little; but oh! too slowly. Pray for your brother John."

"Derby, October, 1833.

"We have some pleasing indications among us in this circuit. Our congregations are improving much, and we have a few conversions. Many of the Derby seceders have returned. We have had fifty or sixty this quarter, and are quite high in expectation of a good and great work. Several have lately obtained

full salvation, and are 'witnessing that sin is all destroyed.' On each of the two or three last Sabbaths there have been awakenings and conversions. O for more power—more faith—love—zeal—unction, and prayer; and then we shall see more fruit.

"October 3rd, 1833.

"My mind has lately been exercised very painfully about receiving back some of the seceders, as there is a divided opinion. I fear lest it should injure the work of God, and prevent the salvation of souls. I doubt not it is a stratagem of the enemy to prevent a coming revival; but I hope he shall not succeed.

'The enemy his tares hath sown,
But Christ shall shortly root them up.'

"My soul has been depressed on this and other accounts, yet I trust I am not losing ground in the best things. I am striving to maintain a more habitual sense of God's presence, and labour that whether present or absent I may be accepted of Him. O let us pray for each other. I have been reading Dr. Payson's life; a man of extraordinary piety—deep devotion—burning zeal. O for more of his spirit! I have been very much blessed in preaching lately, and have seen some fruit. To God be all the glory."

In the spring, he again went to Torquay; the death of his sister was daily anticipated, and his parents were anxious they should meet once more. He writes:—

"May, 1834.

"Dear Eliza begs affectionate love. She is very happy; peace and patience are manifest. Having a desire to depart, she frequently prays—'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' Yet patience seems to have its perfect work. No doubts; not a cloud for a moment obscures her evidence; nor is any temptation permitted to molest her, or disturb her mind."

Eliza Henley was received up into glory within a week after: her last moments were full of rapture. It is rather remarkable that eight years afterwards, on the same day of the month, and at the same hour of

the day, her brother John, the subject of these memorials, passed 'through death triumphant home.'

During the summer of this year, he was out of his circuit a great deal, preaching occasional sermons; and God gave him success in every place. At Cromford, a glorious work broke out, and ten or twelve professed to find peace with God at one service. Many more were added afterwards. At Derby also, his labours were blessed, though not to the extent desired. He writes on the 20th of July:—"Four or five found peace last Sunday night at Green Hill, and two or three more on Tuesday at King-street."

He preached out of doors, in most of the country places, on the week nights; and at such times invited the people to prayer meetings. His aim, his prayer, and his faith were directed to present effects; and, more or less, God granted him his heart's desire.

Mr. H. paid much attention to the children of his people, and frequently went to the Sabbath Schools to give addresses and instruction. He had in Derby a very lovely circle of young persons and children, who attended on Saturday afternoons for religious conversation. To these he was very warmly attached; and although he formed these meetings in every circuit in which he travelled, yet he never had a more interesting group, nor any who loved and valued him more than they did in Derby. On his leaving, they presented him with a bible, as a mark of esteem; and perhaps few books were more highly prized by him, not only for its intrinsic value, but for the circumstances under which it had been received.

It may not be out of place, though rather out of date, to insert a few sentences of a letter written by one of these young friends soon after he left Derby. She says:—

"It is with true pleasure I write you. I hope I am not entirely forgotten by you, unworthy as I am of a place in your memory. I would be remembered in your prayers. I would that you should ask the Lord to guide me with His counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. I have many pleasant thoughts of you, and many a blessed word which hath fallen from your

lips is written upon my heart. Oh! with what heart-felt joy do I recall those blessed Saturday afternoons which I spent with you and your little flock. Oftentimes doth their memory steal with a softening power over my mind, and some word that you have spoken—some exhortation given—some prayer offered up for our eternal welfare, comes suddenly back in its full power, and my heart grows soft and my tears flow at the recollection. I once heard you repeat a few words which, though extremely simple, were to me beautifully sweet. You were just about to pray, and you said—'Now, my little children,

> 'Clasp your hands, and shut your eyes,
> And think of God above the skies.'

Oh! since that sweet time, how many a change have I seen—how many a sorrow felt. Closed are the eyes that watched over my infancy; silent the tongue which first taught me to speak; and the spirit that first led me to a throne of grace hath returned to the God that gave it. Oh! my dear Sir, pray for me, that I may be kept faithful unto death through Jesus Christ my Lord."

Many circumstances contributed to render Derby exceedingly dear to Mr. HENLEY. He had a large class, chiefly composed of young people. They loved him, and the feeling was reciprocated. They, too, begged his acceptation of a mark of affection: he appreciated it as it deserved, but his extreme sense of delicacy would seldom allow him to have it used. "I prefer not, if it can be avoided," he has often said; "at least those parts of it on which my name is used; it looks so like display. I shall never cease in my attachment to the members of that class, but it would be a sacrifice of feeling, and I hate show."

The extraordinary piety and devotion of Mr. HENLEY to his Master's service, were remarkably exemplified during his residence at Derby. He maintained close communion with God; lived in the spirit of his duty; and acted upon his own favourite sentiment, that a minister, to be very happy must be very holy. His preaching, always marked by vigour of thought and

doctrinal correctness, was at this time peculiarly accurate and argumentative; fitted at once to demolish error and to establish the truth. In prayer, the rich influence of the Spirit which rested upon him, and which all around him participated, indicated how close was the communion which he maintained with God. Often as he commenced, a sacred solemnity would pervade the assembly, engaging every heart in intercourse with heaven; while, as he beheld and claimed the covenanted blessing with all the earnestness of desire, the boldness of faith, and the confidence of present expectation, the feelings of the people would rise with his own, and sighs of penitential grief and groans of spiritual anguish, and ardent aspirations after pardon and peace, would ascend from many hearts, which would gradually be exchanged for the breathings of humble faith, and the raptures of adoring love. To his persevering attention to persons who are earnestly seeking salvation, much of the success of his ministry may be attributed. Frequently on a Sabbath evening, after a day of unremitting toil, and when his strength seemed already exhausted, he would remain with persons in such circumstances to a very late hour, pointing out with beautiful simplicity the nature of justifying faith, wrestling with God in prayer on their behalf, and refusing to leave them until they had found peace.

To the poor of the church his attention was exemplary. With the temporal necessities of such he carefully acquainted himself, and tenderly sympathised; and his charities were always large and liberal. One tenth of his whole income he conscientiously distributed to the poor. Nor was he backward to urge this duty upon others, who had it in their power to relieve the necessities of the distressed. To the sick he was also remarkably attentive, and his visits were frequently made a signal blessing. Indeed, in every department of his duty he laboured with unsparing diligence; and the exertions of himself and his colleagues, during the three years which they spent in Derby, did much to heal the wounds of the society there, and to promote its lasting prosperity.

Unhappily Mr. HENLEY had not learnt, even from

the consequences of his former imprudence or the obligations imposed by his domestic ties, to confine his exertions within the limits of his strength. It was the oft-expressed conviction of all his friends, that he was by excessive toil bringing himself to an untimely grave. Often when from extreme indisposition he was really unfit to leave his room, and when a substitute might have been obtained, he would persist in going to some distant appointment; and while there, would seem to forget his weakness, and to be insensible to all but the "glorious passion of saving souls." One only wish swallowed him up—that "Christ should be magnified in him, whether by life or by death." To the imprudence of his excessive exertions allusion has already been made, and it is repeated with tender regret. It is too sacred a subject for censure. In his bosom the fire of divine love burned with a flame so ardent that it consumed the altar which contained it. He was a willing martyr in the cause of his Redeemer. And if a love so holy, if a zeal so benevolent, if an enthusiasm so divine, became so intense as to overpower the fleshy tabernacle; it seems most fitting not to blame its indulgence or condemn its excess, but rather to drop the silent tear over feeble humanity, and to pray for a faith, a love, a *lot* like his!

CHAP. IX.

"AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT HE THAT IS LEFT IN ZION SHALL BE CALLED HOLY, * * WHEN THE LORD SHALL HAVE PURGED THE BLOOD OF JERUSALEM FROM THE MIDST THEREOF BY THE SPIRIT OF JUDGMENT AND THE SPIRIT OF BURNING." "UPON ALL THE GLORY SHALL BE A DEFENCE.' —ISAIAH IV., 3—5.

Dudley—Reform—Anti-Church Agitation—Secession—Tipton—Letter—Healing Measures—Extract of a letter from a Friend—To his Brother—Indications of Prosperity—Extracts—Controversy with Seceders—'Wesleyan Methodism Vindicated' 'A calm and affectionate Address'—Ministerial Usefulness—Measures to promote a Revival of Religion—Uncommon Labours—Illness—Letters—Partial Recovery—Improved state of the Circuit—Removal. 1835—8

THE period to which this part of the narrative refers was one of most painful interest to the whole Methodist community. The popular agitation connected with the passing of the reform bill, had affected multitudes who, under ordinary circumstances, take no part in political affairs; while among all classes the questions then at issue were discussed with a degree of warmth and bitterness happily uncommon even in the annals of party debate. No subject was deemed too sacred to supply material for public controversy. The mania for reform pervaded the mind of society at large: every system was imagined to be rife in evils and abuses, and the desire to rectify them became a passion whose operations it was difficult to confine, and whose impetuosity it was impossible to subdue. It was not probable that the Methodist Society should be exempt from a participation of this evil. Composed of men of every shade of political opinion;—availing itself of the services of every kind of talent and of all classes of society;—exhibiting an illustration of the mighty results of combined operation having no existing parallel;—and yet

sternly refusing absolutely to identify itself with any political party; it could not but suffer from the morbid excitement of feeling on public questions, which at that unhappy period in countless instances separated very friends, severed the closest bonds of brotherhood, and threatened to involve the whole fabric of society in one common ruin. The refusal of the Conference to support or countenance any movement hostile to the religious establishment of the country, and the prudence of the ministers generally in abstaining from active interference in questions of state, gave great offence, not only to other religious communities who thought and acted differently, but to multitudes of Methodists themselves. The importance of the co-operation of the connexion in its corporate capacity was well understood by the movement party, and every means was employed to obtain it. It is impossible to conceive what would have been the probable consequences, had not this been withheld. To the establishment at least they would have been perilous in the extreme. At that period, changes the most revolutionary were deliberately entertained by the mass of the people; the claim of prescriptive rights was treated with derision; hoary antiquity served only to indicate the necessity of reform; the glaring abuses and practical inefficiency of the Church of England supplied a popular and powerful argument against national religious establishments in general; and hundreds of thousands were banded together, whose views and feelings were in other respects most unlike each other, but whose principle of union was their common hostility to such establishments, and their determination to employ every possible means to subvert and overthrow them.

In a crisis like this, had the whole influence of the Methodist Society been thrown into the scale;—had they heartily participated the feelings of the opponents of the church, and resolutely combined to effect their object;—it is a grave and serious question whether any power then existed capable of effectually resisting them, especially when it is remembered that among a numerous party within the legislature, the passion for change was well nigh as rife as it was among the people at

large. The decision, however, that it was the duty of the connexion to avoid all unnecessary interference in political affairs, and especially not to assume a position of hostility to the church, was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the ministers, and approved by the great mass of the societies; and this had a powerful tendency to allay the excitement which had before prevailed. Yet there was a numerous class of persons who disapproved of this decision; and in some places the feeling was so strong as to occasion very painful and unhappy consequences. Among these places none suffered more severely than Dudley. In this town there had been for many years a large society, which before this period was in a state of great prosperity. Unhappily, however, many of its members took an active part in political matters, and embraced very decided opinions. To some of these the resolutions of the Conference were extremely obnoxious and they expressed their feelings respecting them in language sufficiently harsh and severe. It would be equally painful and profitless to trace the workings of the leaven of dissatisfaction which was thus introduced, and which ultimately pervaded nearly the whole society. The unhappy issue was, that a very large number eventually seceded from it; some only for a time, who afterwards returned; others to connect themselves with other churches; and not a few, it is to be feared, to relapse again into ungodliness and sin.

That the authors of this pernicious agitation deserved the severest censure, and incurred the most awful responsibility, cannot be questioned; while it is equally certain that they were far from originally intending the whole amount of mischief which they ultimately perpetrated. The headlong excesses into which they plunged themselves, and in the guilt of which many beside were involved, demonstrate the danger of indulging a spirit of discord, and forcibly illustrate the precept of the wise man, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with."

The melancholy state of the Dudley circuit engaged the anxious consideration of the Conference, and as

the only means of gathering up the scattered remnants of the church there, and, as far as possible, repairing the injury inflicted upon it, peculiar care was exercised in the choice of ministers for the ensuing year, whose piety, ability, and judgment, would guarantee a faithful administration of christian discipline on the one hand, and every prudent measure of conciliation on the other. Mr. HENLEY was one of those selected for this important service, and he was in many respects admirably adapted to it. His deep piety, and his extraordinary diligence, were already well known to his brethren; and his successful co-operation in allaying the unhallowed excitement in the society at Derby, and in repairing the evils consequent upon it, were equally attested by his affectionate colleagues, and by the manifestly improved condition of the circuit itself.

It may be easily imagined that this appointment was not in harmony with his wishes. He was anxious to find a sphere of labour where the peaceful prosecution of his much-loved work, that of being instrumental in the salvation of souls, should engross his undivided attention and where he should hear no more the strife of tongues. He had, moreover, had his attention drawn in a different direction, and had conditionally accepted an invitation to another circuit. But the cloudy pillar appeared to direct his course to Dudley, and he acquiesced in what he believed to be the will of Providence.

He thus writes from the conference, to inform Mrs. H. of the appointment.

"You will be disappointed and grieved to hear that I am now fixed for Dudley. I regret it on your account; but I hope we shall both submit without murmuring. We must regard it as the will of God; and in the name of the Lord go, fearing nothing. We are much blessed in having such excellent colleagues as Mr. Adams as Superintendent, and Mr. Smedley. With some discouragements, we shall have some advantages."

On his arrival in Dudley, he was received with great cordiality by that part of the society which remained, and entered with his wonted cheerfulness and ardour upon his important duties. He resided at Tipton, a

large village nearly two miles from the circuit town, and in the centre of a thickly populated mining district. Though this place had suffered less than some parts of the circuit, yet the unhappy effects of the mischievous agitation which had been excited were painfully visible on every side. The congregations were diminished, the society scattered, and mutual jealousy and estrangement among the people had taken place of unity and godly love.

Mr. HENLEY arrived there on Friday evening; and, finding that it was the usual time for a prayer meeting, he hastened at once to the chapel, where a considerable number of persons were assembled. He prayed twice with great fervour, and gave an exhortation. A holy influence rested upon the meeting. Many were greatly blessed, and all felt their hopes awakened that God would again revive his work among them; while a favourable impression respecting their new minister was produced, which was never removed during his residence in the circuit.

Mr. H. and his excellent colleagues found things in a worse condition than even they had been led to fear. In several places the chapels were actually taken away, and it was necessary to have recourse, in some instances, to legal measures, to recover possession of them; while but a wreck of the society remained. They at once proceeded to adopt the most judicious means of quelling the prevailing excitement, and of restoring peace and prosperity. They met and conferred with the leaders of the disaffected party; listened to their objections, explained what had occasioned misunderstanding, and sought by expostulation and entreaty to turn them from the fatal course they were pursuing. At the same time, they laboured to restore the tone of religious feeling among the people, and to unite all in earnest desires and effective co-operation for a revival of the work of God. Success in some degree soon crowned their endeavours.

To one of his most attached friends, who had requested a detailed account of the causes and effects of the agitated state of things in Dudley, after complying with his request, Mr. H. thus writes:—

"Tipton, December 1st, 1835.

* * * * "Well, thank God, after all, in the midst of all our discouragements and difficulties, we are gaining ground. In those parts of the circuit where we have peace, and in some where we have had great opposition, there have been conversions. Our people that remain with us are much united, and generally anxious to co-operate in forwarding the work. Several of the old members have obtained a higher salvation; and many more are panting after purity of heart. Souls are saved every week, more or less, and sometimes every night.

"You may expect that I did not come to Dudley from choice. I really was very reluctant to come to a circuit in such circumstances; but I have every reason to believe that I am in my right place: I never before had so many proofs of it in so short a time; and though we have been slandered, hissed, persecuted, have had the chapel doors shut against us, aye, and been stoned more than once in one of the places we go to, and on one occasion I was followed by a number of 'reformers' for more than a mile, shouting after me, and all this under the names, 'liberty, reform, religion;' yet whilst God is with us, and good is being done, we will say—

'All hail, reproach! and welcome, shame!'

Glory be to God, the work is reviving—congregations improving—a few wanderers returning, and sinners repenting. It will probably take some years to repair the loss in the circuit as to number, unless something very remarkable should take place; but as to unity, peace, and prosperity, in proportion to our numbers, I have no doubt but Dudley Methodism, after the purification it has had in this division, will far excel what it has been for many years before. But who is to account to God for the *souls* that have been *lost*, and will be lost through this agitation? Oh! I tremble for those by whom the offence came, and on whom the woe is denounced. I would not for a thousand worlds have to answer for the mischief done by certain individuals.

"You have perhaps heard that we have been obliged to commence a prosecution of two of the trustees of King-street chapel, and five other men, for hindering a local preacher from occupying the pulpit a few weeks ago, and thus preventing the worship and disturbing the congregation. They pleaded before the magistrates their right as trustees, and contended that none but travelling preachers had any right to the pulpit. The magistrates, however, said that they had nothing to do with that question; they (the defendants) had evidently disturbed the worship of God in a place licensed according to the provisions of the toleration act; and they were therefore bound over to appear at the next quarter sessions for the county.

"We have nearly finished ticket giving, and hope we shall find an increase of a hundred, including persons on trial, chiefly gathered from the world. Glory to God!

"I am trying to get into the way of condensing for the pulpit, so that I may say nothing but what is to the point and likely to tell upon the people: but I have much to do in the pastoral way: living at Tipton, a mile from Dudley, the principal care of this society, in which there are upwards of three hundred, rests upon me, and within five minutes walk is another chapel and society of fifty members.

"The population of this neighbourhood is very dense; and after all, there is a great deal of Methodism. There are in this (Tipton) parish, which is only two miles across, six, aye seven large Wesleyan chapels. Three of them belong to this circuit, the others to Wednesbury.

"Do not forget, when at a throne of grace, to pray for your warm and sincere friend."

From the above extract it will be seen that Mr. H., in the midst of the conflicting elements around him, had his eye fixed on his great work, and was prosecuting it with steady determination and undiminished zeal. From the conviction that the disaffection of the agitating party was more the result of prejudice than reason, and existed rather in their feelings than in their judgment, he usually forbore to enter into discussion

with them; but when he did so, he showed himself so perfectly versed in the subjects at issue, and so well prepared to defend the views he entertained that his opponents could not but respect his opinions, while his uniform good temper and affection endeared him to all. But he anxiously sought to divert the attention of all to that controversy which God has with guilty sinners, to urge an immediate reconciliation with their heavenly adversary, and to exchange the discord of the strife of tongues for the harmony of prayer and praise. Nor was he ever more unwearied in his labours in the cause of Christ. A friend who knew him well at this period, and who now affectionately reveres his memory, thus writes:—

"I really do not wonder, when I think of his labours, at his being taken to heaven before his time. I have known him preach on the Sunday morning at nine o'clock at Tipton, in the open air; in the Dudley chapel, a mile and a half distant, at half-past ten; in the Gornal chapel, a mile from Dudley, at half-past two; in the open air on his way back at four; and again at six in Dudley, holding a protracted prayer meeting afterwards, which was not concluded until ten o'clock; and this was a thing of frequent occurrence. At the prayer meetings, he was much too prodigal of his strength. I have been present when he has given six or eight exhortations in the course of one meeting, and prayed as many times. He also exerted himself greatly in singing. You know he had a good ear and a taste for music; and at these meetings he usually began the tunes, admirably adapting them to the words as well as the words to the occasion. At the country places on the week evenings, after visiting from house to house, he would frequently preach in the open air at six o'clock; and at the conclusion, go singing on the way to the chapel, taking the people along with him. He was what is commonly called a revivalist (which is what I think every minister should be); but he was one of the most consistent I ever knew. As a pastor, he very much excelled. Wherever affliction or distress was, thither he would eagerly bend his steps. One night about twelve o'clock, he was sent for to visit a dying

man. He was reminded of the distance and danger, being more than a mile, and over a coal field in which were several uncovered pits; but nothing would induce him to delay his visit until morning. 'If,' said he, 'I go to bed without seeing him, I shall not be able to sleep; besides, the man may be in eternity before morning. *I must go!*' I could mention many other cases of a similar kind.

"If any ask, what was the result of all this labour? I answer, the conversion of scores, and I should not exceed were I to say hundreds of souls to God. Before I close this letter I may add, that when MR. HENLEY came among us, most of the chapels that remained after the division were much burdened with debt; and in many cases, a large part of the congregations and pew holders having gone with the seceding party, it became necessary to make special efforts to reduce the debts. In promoting these Mr. H. was of great service. The debt upon the chapel at Tipton was reduced £600, and this almost entirely among ourselves. Throughout the circuit, the trustees were much indebted to his exertions. In no case did we receive half the amount liquidated from the chapel fund. Indeed, there was no department of God's cause but he appeared to throw his whole soul into; and he generally succeeded in what he undertook. I grieve to add, that for months before he removed from us, his health visibly failed so that he was unequal to the whole of his work; and for a time he left the circuit for the benefit of his native air. It is impossible for me to tell the anxiety which was evinced by the friends generally for his recovery. The June Quarterly meeting was postponed, to afford us, for the last time, the happiness of having all our ministers present, as they would then all finish their third year. It was a memorable day. We recalled the trying circumstances in which they had found us, and rejoiced in the delightful change which had been witnessed. They had found hardly 500 members, and now we had no less than 1,150. A most unanimous and heartfelt expression of our thanks was made to them all. Upon dear Mr. HENLEY we looked with mingled feelings. We were

thankful for the good he had been the instrument of effecting; and yet we could not but feel that, for our sakes and for the cause of God, his invaluable life was by excessive labours likely to be prematurely closed. Still he was much better than he had been, and we hoped he might yet recover. The few remaining weeks that he spent with us, we did all we could to help him; and when he left us and commended us to God in the arms of faith and prayer, many thought and said with me that we should never look upon his like again."

The above interesting letter has anticipated the date of the following, but it is believed no apology will be needed for their insertion.

"Dudley, March 9th, 1836.

"To his Brother.

"And, now my dear Robert, a word with you on another subject of *far* greater importance, a subject about which I am very anxious—your soul's welfare. What are you doing? Are you giving your heart to God? Have you earnestly sought and assuredly found 'redemption in the blood of Christ, the *forgiveness* of sins?' I am jealous over you. I am afraid you are neglecting the great salvation. I know not why, but lately I have been led to think about you and pray for you more than ever. My solicitude for your soul has been deep and intense; and the *distress* it gives me, when I think of the bare possibility of one of the family living and dying without religion, I cannot describe. O! my dear brother, if you have not become decided, whilst you read this come to the resolution, 'I will be a christian:—by the grace of God I will this moment renounce sin, and begin to seek, and rest not till I find, the pearl of great price.' Can you assign any good reason why you should not *now* make this resolution? If you can find such a reason, go on your knees and tell God so. But you dare not tell Him you have any just cause why you should not give Him your heart, or for delaying to do so. Say not, 'I have not power; I must wait God's time.' *Now* is the accepted time. You have been the subject of the Spirit's

strivings. Years ago I have seen the penitential tear, and heard the cry for mercy. Remember, all the religious advantages you have had, and all the gracious visitations with which you have been favoured, will go to aggravate your guilt and enhance your punishment, if you do not yield yourself to the Lord. It is your duty this moment to surrender yourself to Him who hath bought you, and begin to wrestle and pray for pardon. Now be entreated by your anxious affectionate brother, and immediately join yourself with the people, and become a devoted, active, zealous Methodist.

"God is reviving His work in many places. Even in this, so lately all but ruined circuit, He is raising us. We have added above two hundred since Conference. We have conversions every week, and sometimes every night. To God be praise! The Lord gives me favour in the sight of the people, and much encouragement; and though I have had to bear reproach and all manner of evil said falsely of me by the 'reformers,' as they style themselves, have been hissed, mobbed, pelted with stones, and all in the name, *professedly*, of religion; yet whilst God is with us, and good is done, I fear not, but pursue my course undaunted and untired, and have not for one moment regretted coming to the circuit."

Though the state of the circuit presented much of a discouraging nature, Mr. HENLEY and his colleagues were not without cheering indications. The societies, though "scattered and peeled" by the recent secession, were becoming daily more united together; and a spirit of zeal and liberality in the cause of God was manifested, which was most honourable to their character. Numbers were also adding to them daily, who filled up the places of those who had left, and contributed to render the loss less perceptible. To these circumstances Mr. H. refers in the following passages from letters to a friend.

"Tipton, May 13th, 1836.

"Here I am through mercy safe, after the longest holiday I have had for years. I feel glad to get to my work again. On reaching Bristol in the evening,

I was so fortunate as to be able to get to their Missionary Meeting, held that evening at St. Philip's; Mr. Montgomery in the chair. All was good: speakers, collections, &c.

"Have you heard of the Dudley collection for the chapel last Sunday? What think you?—£307! This does not include the £200 given by two trustees for the lessening the debt. Who say, 'Stop the supplies?'

"21.—I have been fully engaged at the District Meeting till last evening. The Dudley preachers received the thanks of that meeting for their conduct during the year: also the Stourbridge and Shrewsbury preachers. About nine hundred members have left in the disturbed circuits in this district since last Conference; but in other circuits the increase has been nearly sufficient to make up the loss, besides one thousand four hundred on trial."

The following was addressed to a friend who was suffering from circumstances of a very afflicting nature:—

"October 12th, 1836.

"You see there is only a shabby corner of the sheet left for me; however, it will allow me to express my deep and sincere interest in your welfare, and solicitude for your recovery. I am still full of hope that, however unpromising things may look at present, you will ere long rally and rapidly regain your health. I hope your mind is kept in peace, and in patience. You are now called on to 'glorify God in the fires.' Do not forget that the cup, though 'bitter to the taste,' is mixed by your Father's hand; and its influence will be salutary. Whatever be the result, strive to leave it all to Him who careth for you. I hope —— will not indulge her gloomy fears. Tell her I think she fears *too much*. I do not wonder at her feeling very anxious, but still I hope her apprehensions are groundless. At any rate, nothing *can* happen amiss—nothing but *good*—nothing but the *very best*—to those whose Father is the God of providence as well as grace. O how tranquillising the consideration, 'My times are in Thy hands!' It is enough; there let them be; they are in good hands; there shall they remain.

'Never will I remove
Out of Thy hands my cause.'

You will perhaps be tempted to say, 'All that is very easy to write upon paper, and is soon said; but to feel it, and to feel it in the time of trial, is another thing;' and yet the grace of God is sufficient, and I doubt not you both do and will prove its all-sufficiency.

"That you may, is and shall be the prayer of your sincere and affectionate friend,

"J. H."

In the early part of 1837 it was deemed necessary to take effective measures to recover possession of some of the chapels of which the society had been forcibly deprived during the agitation. This, of course, opened up the controversy afresh, and for a time seemed to stir up the embers of discord, which were ready to die. The seceding party appealed to the public by means of pamphlets, &c., and to some of these the friends of the connection saw fit to reply. Mr. H. had never yet appeared as a public writer; nor had he bestowed that pains on the attainment of a correct style of composition, which the clearness of his conceptions and his powers of argumentation deserved. In this case, however, departing from his usual practice, he issued two pamphlets, one entitled, "Wesleyan Methodism Vindicated," and the other, "A calm and affectionate address to the late Seceders from the Dudley Circuit." Both were equally creditable to his head and his heart, and proved that he might have become a popular writer, had literary pursuits more fully engaged his attention.

These publications were of considerable service. Many were convinced that the seceders were wrong, and regretted the steps they had taken; while many more saw the evil of party divisions, and earnestly panted for unity and peace. The successful termination of the measures above referred to, contributed to this end, so that the agitation gradually died away, or was exchanged for the holy emulation of brethren in Christ Jesus striving together for the faith of the Gospel.

Mr. H.'s ministry in Dudley was rendered a great

blessing. On Sabbath evenings especially, he generally saw fruit of his labours. It was common to witness ten or twelve persons at once kneeling at the communion rail in distress, seeking for pardon; and a meeting rarely terminated without some of them realizing that blessing. He usually held a prayer meeting after preaching, never omitting to conduct it himself, unless when he had to renew the tickets of the society, and then he would join it when he had done. He esteemed the public meetings of the society after service as of great importance, and sometimes convened them himself; but he thought others excelled him in conducting them, and that prayer meetings were his more especial work. Throughout the week he never had a leisure evening; every night was engaged. Though his usefulness was eminent, his views of himself were very humble. Many of his friends remember, that if he were asked a question respecting meetings where his own labours had been instrumental of good, he would evade the question, or merely reply, "I believe good was done." He often said that he believed "the sin of revivalists was self-esteem," but it was one of which none who knew Mr. HENLEY could suppose him guilty. During the early part of the year 1837, the attention of the society at Tipton was especially directed to the best means of promoting a revival of the work of God. In consequence of this, cards were issued, of which the following is a copy:—

"'O LORD, REVIVE THY WORK!'

"At a special meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, Tipton, held January 2nd, 1837, a large proportion of the members solemnly engaged, in dependence on divine aid, to use the following means for the revival of the work of God:—

"1. United prayer for the 'outpouring of the Spirit,' and in particular prayer for this every day at *half-past one* o'clock.

"2. United efforts, by each member endeavouring to bring, in the course of the present quarter, at least *one* additional hearer to the house of God; and to persuade,

if possible, one sinner to seek the Lord and join His people in the course of the year.

"'I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence.'—Isaiah lxii., 6.

"And the Lord said unto the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'—Luke xiv., 23."

A very gracious influence from this time rested upon the society. Instances of conversion were numerous. The church became more consolidated and vigorous than it had been before the lamentable agitation which had occurred; and every one seemed zealous for the Lord of Hosts. It will easily be imagined that this gave new energy to the efforts of Mr. HENLEY. He was in labours yet more abundant. In the language of his affectionate and now bereaved partner, "His zeal for the cause of God knew no bounds. He preached regularly three times on the Sabbath by appointment with his brethren, but this was far from satisfying him. After the afternoon service he met the Sunday School children and addressed them, or took his stand in some populous neighbourhood to try by any means to bring souls to Christ. Many seasons are fresh in my recollection, when I have urged him to rest on the sofa for an hour before evening preaching, and have left him thinking I had gained my point; and perhaps within ten minutes after have heard singing in the distance, and on crossing the garden have seen him on the steps of a forsaken Popish chapel, proclaiming the Lamb of God. He was

'Dauntless, untired.'

But he was aware that his labours would have been a bad precedent for others. He was the last to condemn another. I never recollect to have heard the slightest censure pass his lips in reference to his brethren in this respect: his language was, 'I think there are very few that could do as I can;—it would be sin in them, for many constitutions would not stand it; besides, one man has a talent in one way, and another in another

way. Every man has his appointed work; it is enough for me that I do mine without looking about me.' He certainly often blamed himself for inactivity, strange as the accusation was to those who knew him. It was once pleasantly said of him at Witney, that he 'never was at rest unless he was at work:' assuredly he never was so happy as when employed for God. Hundreds of out-door preachings were never known to his own family, and when, perhaps from some accidental circumstances, such were mentioned, he would smilingly say, 'I dared not tell you, for you would say I am killing myself, but you know I am immortal till my work is done.'"

The following extract of a letter from one of his affectionate friends in Dudley, will be read with pleasure:—

"His deepest anxiety was to 'save souls from death.' Herein all his mental and physical energies were ever at the utmost stretch. His pulpit services were marked by a point, an energy, and a fervour, of which those only who were privileged with hearing him could form any just estimate; and this was not upon extraordinary occasions, but at *all times*. He seemed to have the care of souls so heavily upon him, that he was ever 'travailing in birth' for them; and nothing could satisfy his ardent spirit, but manifest evidences of success. No Sabbath evening's public duty was closed, nor often the week nights, however much he might have exhausted his strength in the pulpit, without a prayer meeting which was generally held in the body of the chapel, and often lasted from one to two hours, and sometimes much longer. In these meetings, he would frequently seem carried even beyond himself. He would pray with such energy and unction, as though he would 'take heaven by violence:' yet his was not the violence of noise, but of holy irresistible pleading; while his soul appeared ready to mount above terrestrial things, and to bear all around him in the arms of his expanding love to the footstool of the Redeemer as trophies of His blood. In these exercises, his physical strength was put to a trial beyond its power long to sustain; and here it was, as I conceive, that that shock was given to his constitution, which issued in his 'sun going down at noon.' Often have I and others warned him

against such ceaseless and even reckless draughts upon his animal frame; but such was his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, that he literally 'counted not his life dear unto himself,' so that he might bring sinners to God. No man could more truly adopt the words of his Lord and say, 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.' Nor were his labours confined to the house of God: his diligence in his pastoral duties was not inferior to that of the sanctuary. He was, in short, one of the most holy, zealous and useful preachers I have ever known; and a most faithful, kind, and judicious friend. Following him in hope and desire to the mansions where he now dwells, my heart exclaims,

'O may I meet thee there
In that bright world above;
And with thy ransom'd spirit share
The joys of heavenly love!'"

In the January of 1832, Mr. H. was taken ill with influenza and a violent attack of spasms. This so weakened him that he did not recover his strength for months. The week before Easter, he went to Derby, to preach on the Good Friday, and to try if change of air and a little rest would do him good; but he returned no better. Inflammation in the mucous membrane of the bowels had taken place, so that he was obliged to give up entirely. He was recommended to try his native air, and in May went into Devonshire, and thence to Weymouth.

The following letters written to some whom he loved, will speak for him at this period:—

"May 16th, 1838.

"My dear Friend,—I have been hoping from day to day to be able to visit you; but am still a prisoner, confined entirely to the house. I am, however, better; but to continue so, and to regain my health, I must, I suppose, submit to *absolute rest* and quiet. Thus I have an opportunity of studying experimentally the text from which you have requested me to preach—'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength;' or the other, so nearly resembling it—'Your strength shall be to sit still.' Well, well; it is all right: I have covenanted with the Lord to be em-

ployed for Him, or to be laid aside for Him—to do His will, or to suffer it; and I do not complain. I thank God I have not the slightest inclination to do so. But now, after all this on the subject of self, which was not what I intended to write about, I must enquire after your health and spiritual state. I was sorry to hear that you remained so ill; and knowing, as I do, what has been your desponding and anxious state of mind for some time, I have been concerned for you, and wishing for an opportunity of saying to you, '*Be of good cheer.*' 'Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Christ.' And why should you indulge gloomy fears and doubts? 'Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord?' That you have possessed the divine favour and rejoiced in the light of His countenance, you cannot doubt; why then should you now give way to unbelief? Is it because of your various and complicated trials? These do not prove the divine displeasure; they are chastenings of discipline, but not of anger. Is it because you cannot see what good end can be answered by such varied afflictions? It was never promised that you should see *now* what these things mean. Is it even that by unwatchfulness or unfaithfulness you in some way have actually grieved the Holy Spirit, and feel that you have thus cast away your confidence? Be it so: there is cause for humiliation and sorrow, but none for despondency. There is no reason why you should for *one hour* remain in darkness, mourning an absent Saviour. Be humble enough to accept of free forgiveness again. 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.' Go to the blood as at first. Cast your soul on the atonement. However feeble and afflicted the body, however depressed the soul, cast yourself, body, soul, circumstances, all on the Rock of Ages. There is firm footing—there is peace—comfort—*all.* I must conclude these hasty lines, praying that you may be enabled by the great comforter to 'rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; continue instant in prayer.' Yours affectionately,

"JOHN HENLEY."

"Torquay, June, 1838.

"I must not allow this letter to go to you, my dear friends, without an expression of sorrow and sympathy on account of your affliction; but I hope you are, ere this, much better. It is sometimes darkest just before day breaks; and I hope that providentially and spiritually you have begun to see the day break auspiciously on you both. To —— I must repeat the admonition, '*Cheer up!*' 'Be of good cheer.' This is of great importance, even to your health. *Do* try to drive desponding thoughts away. Bid fear and unbelief be gone. Repress promptly and perseveringly every suggestion that has a tendency to induce hard thoughts of God. All his ways are *right*, *wise*, *kind*, however dark and mysterious. Hope then in God, and you shall praise Him, and rejoice in the light of His countenance.

"You will be pleased to hear, that though I have been worse since coming here, in consequence of a relapse, I am now fast recovering my health and strength. I shall have to be very cautious and moderate in my labours when I return to them, (as there will be probably a liability to a return of my old complaint,) for a few months to come. We intend to be home by the end of next week, when I hope to be able to resume my work, and till which time I purpose to be quite still.

"Praying most sincerely that you may both be speedily and perfectly restored to health, and come out of the fire as purified gold, I am, my dear friends, yours most affectionately,

"JOHN HENLEY."

His illness at this time was so severe and protracted as to awaken the deep anxiety of his friends. He had before suffered from occasional indisposition, which was correctly attributed to his incessant labours. But the symptoms were now so various and so conflicting, that they seemed to baffle the skill of his medical attendants, and to indicate a general breaking up of his constitution. The physical labours and mental excitement of his last two circuits especially, had told fearfully upon

him. Though yet but a young man, his grey hair and his whole appearance denoted premature decay. He suffered excessively from rheumatism in the feet and joints of the legs, so that he could scarcely walk a step without pain; and other symptoms appeared at intervals, as the aspect of the disease varied almost daily. He left Dudley for change of air, and removed from place to place, as his own inclination or the advice of his friends suggested. For the first month no visible improvement took place; but after that time he rapidly revived. He derived great benefit from the course of treatment recommended by Dr. Tetley, an eminent physician of Torquay, under whose care he remained for some time. To this gentleman he was laid under great obligations. His professional services were rendered in the most disinterested manner; and to his skilful and judicious treatment, his friendly sympathy, and his unremitting attention, he attributed his restoration to health. In after years, Mr. HENLEY frequently spoke of his kindness with deep emotion; and he never ceased to cherish a grateful recollection of it.

In the month of June, he returned to his circuit and resumed his work. The attachment of the friends in Tipton, and in the circuit generally, which was evinced by their tender sympathy with him during his illness, their deep anxiety for his recovery, and their tender solicitude lest he should by unnecessary exposure incur a relapse of his disease, deeply affected Mr. HENLEY; and he often adverted to it as an abundant recompense for his labours and sufferings among them. Indeed, on every account, he had much reason to review with gratitude the period of his ministry in Dudley. The mischievous agitation which existed at its commencement, had been effectually subdued; the congregations were generally good; the numbers in society were rapidly increasing; the spiritual state of the church was more satisfactory than it had been for years; and the discord and estrangement of other days was happily exchanged for brotherly love and harmonious co-operation in the work of the Lord. Mr. HENLEY, as well as his affectionate and esteemed colleagues, had entered the circuit with apprehension and reluc-

tance; but they now prepared to leave it in the full persuasion that they had filled a sphere of labour to which the Head of the Church had designated them, and that they had "not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

CHAP. X.

"LOOKING FOR AND HASTING UNTO THE COMING OF THE DAY OF GOD."—2 PETER, III., 12.

Sheffield—Delicate Health—Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism—Mr. Henley a Methodist from conviction—Letter—Views of Heaven—Remarkable Providence—Jackson's Centenary Sermon—Domestic Bereavement—Lectures on Popery—State of the Circuit—Talents for Poetry and Music—Hymn for Children—Lines in an Album—Paraphrase of 1 *Chron. xxviii.*, 9—*Letter—Habitual Cheerfulness—Letter—Rev. Mr. M'Ghee—Noble-mindedness—Letter to Rev. ——.—Failing Health—Conference.* 1838—41.

The appointment of Mr. HENLEY to Sheffield was equally agreeable to the circuit and to himself. His previous acquaintance with some of the principal members of the society there, inclined him to anticipate a kind and affectionate reception; while his well-known piety and zeal led them to entertain sanguine hopes that his labours among them would be rendered an eminent blessing. One only consideration existed, which could not but awaken apprehension both in their minds and in his own—the state of his health.

Before the arrival of the Conference, he had written to inform them of his enfeebled and precarious condition, under the impression that he might not be equal to the amount of labour which would be expected of him, and with the generous desire to free them from their engagement with him, and to put it within their power, if they thought proper, to invite another in his stead. This, however, they declined to do, preferring to accept of such services as his strength would enable him to render; and his appointment took place accordingly.

Though he had apparently recovered from his late alarming indisposition, it was plain that he was no lon-

ger what he had been. He was equal to the fulfilment of his regular duties, but he was totally incapable of that amount of exertion to which his love for souls had been wont to impel him. He could not frequently hold protracted prayer meetings, and he was obliged to confine his pastoral labours within very narrow limits. Out of door preaching he was compelled almost entirely to relinquish; and the kindness of his colleagues and of the friends generally, spared him much of the labour which might have devolved upon him. But notwithstanding all this, he frequently suffered much; and any degree of exposure or excitement more than ordinary, induced a return of symptoms of a very distressing nature. Yet on the whole, it was the opinion both of his friends and of himself, that he was gradually improving, and that he might probably be spared to occupy for many years the sphere of usefulness to which divine providence had called him.

The following is an extract from a letter written upon his arrival in Sheffield, and addressed to Mrs. Henley, who had not yet reached it.

"September 3rd, 1838.

"We arrived in safety. I assure you I feel more than satisfied. The friends are exceedingly kind. I believe we are in the way of providence, and shall do well. I anticipate comfort and usefulness. I am much pleased with the situation of the house; it is both healthy and agreeable. We have only to live to God, and all will be well.

"On Tuesday evening I went, with a young man as my companion, into the country to preach. On our return, we had the most awful thunder storm I ever witnessed. I felt surrounded by God, and was *more than happy*, as you would say. We sung,

'Lo! He comes with clouds descending,' &c.

with real delight. Sometimes the lightning nearly took away my sight; but He who 'rides upon the storm,' held the reins, and we could fear nothing."

For some weeks after his arrival, he continued to enjoy tolerable health; but about the middle of Octo-

ber he caught a violent cold, and was again laid aside. He suffered from a distressing cough, with spasmodic affection of the stomach and bowels; and it was apprehended by his medical attendants that his lungs were already diseased. Once more, however, Providence graciously interposed. After a fortnight's entire relaxation, and a short journey or two for change of air, he so far recovered as to resume part of his duties; and before Christmas he had apparently almost regained his wonted health and vigour.

The following is addressed to one of his much esteemed friends at Derby.

"December 6.

"You will, I think, excuse me for not writing before, when I tell you that, in consequence of the state of my health, I have been ordered to avoid writing as much as possible. I have been on the invalid list, more or less, nearly two months. A bad cold brought on symptoms of my former complaint, and for a fortnight I was quite laid aside. Last week I had another severe spasmodic attack, which laid me up several days; but I preached once on Sunday, and met several classes, and am now doing my work again. The friends are exceedingly kind in urging me not to preach more than is consistent with my health, and the local preachers are very willing to help. I am obliged to be very moderate, to guard against excitement, and to preach short sermons. Some of my Derby friends will say, 'It will be none the worse for that.' Perhaps not, so far as my mere pulpit labours are concerned; but it grieves me that I cannot exert myself in prayer and penitent meetings, and cannot get about amongst the people to visit and pray with them, as I have been wont to do. I hope, however, if I am cautious and moderate, that the Lord will answer the prayer of his people, and in time restore my strength.

"We have great peace and harmony in this circuit, and I think we have a prospect of better days. My poor labours, though I have been obliged to move on at a creeping rate, have not been without some little fruit. But oh! I want to be more holy, that whilst I do less work than I have been used, I may do it better, and not be less useful.

At this time the attention of the whole Methodist community was directed to the commemoration of the centenary of its connexional existence. Nearly 100 years had elapsed since "ten or twelve persons came to Mr. Wesley to know how they might escape the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads;" whom he formed into a class to be met weekly, and thus originated the system and developed the nucleus of that great society which has gone on to extend itself over a considerable part of the world. It was scarcely possible that any enlightened mind should contemplate the rise and progress of the connexion, and contrast its small beginnings and feeble agency with its rapid advancement and wonderful success, without recognising a power more than human, and exclaiming with adoring gratitude, "What hath God wrought!" while it was natural that Methodists themselves, most of whom individually owed to its ministers and agency under God their personal conversion, should be peculiarly affected by it.

The proposal to celebrate this period by special religious services, and by an eucharistic offering to the cause of God, was cordially entertained by every part of the connexion. The meetings which were held in consequence, were of the most delightful description. The spirit of love, joy, and peace, rested upon the assembled churches in a very eminent degree, and awakened unanimous expressions of devout thanksgiving to God. The liberality of the society, always one of its remarkable characteristics, in this instance exceeded all expectation. Offerings were laid upon God's altar on a scale so extensive as to astonish all who witnessed it, and to raise a memorial of sanctified benevolence quite unparalleled in the history of the christian church. Not less than £220,000 was presented by the society on this occasion. Nor was this all. The sacred influence which pervaded the centenary meetings remained with the churches. The fire of divine love kindled afresh among the people, and destroyed the unholy excitement of party feeling which had too long existed, and to which reference has already been made. Sounds of discord were exchanged for the harmony of praise; and the

churches generally were united more closely than before in the bonds of fraternal love. In this delightful jubilee Mr. HENLEY most heartily participated. He was forbidden by the state of his health from taking so prominent a part in the meetings held upon the occasion as he willingly would have done; but as far as he durst, he actively promoted the great design, and fervently rejoiced in its successful accomplishment. It scarcely need be said that he was ardently attached to the Methodist system; but it is not meant by this that he had been from early youth initiated into it, and that thus a blind and passive attachment had been originated and increased. On the contrary, he was well skilled in the science of ecclesiastical polity; he had carefully examined the several systems of church government adopted by the leading denominations of christians, by the rule of scripture and by their practical tendency and results; and he was fully convinced that the system of Methodism harmonized with the outline embodied in the New Testament in a pre-eminent and very remarkable degree;—that it combined the several advantages of episcopacy and independency;—and that, while it preserved a salutary discipline among all the branches of the church, it left sufficient room for a discretionary exercise of peculiar graces and gifts, and for the improvement of those seasons of unusual influence with which God is sometimes pleased to bless his people. Few men were more ardently devoted to Methodism than he, and none more devoutly rejoiced in its prosperity. Nor was he without sanguine hopes that he should again labour, as he had once delighted to do, to build up this part of the universal church. In his letters to his friends he spoke confidently of his recovery. An extract from one written about this time is subjoined.

"January 1st, 1839.

"It is not the want of interest that prevents my filling a sheet for my dear friend, instead of occupying this corner. I am advised to write as little as possible on account of my health. I am, however, very much better than I have been, and I quite hope for a perfect recovery; not perhaps at once, nor without occasional

relapses for some time to come; but ultimately, if I am careful and moderate, I do hope to regain my former and usual health and strength. I am now just creeping along, doing the necessary and appointed work; but little or nothing in the pastoral way, save visiting a sick person when sent for. This, you are aware, does not satisfy me: I hope to do more as health improves. I was sorry to hear you were so much out of health; but I hope you will soon recover strength. I trust you can in your affliction sing with melody of heart, 'Yet will I rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation.' The Lord reigneth! He is your friend and covenant God. This is New Year's Day, and the year's trials and mercies are over, and we are so much nearer the end of our journey. Soon, very soon, time, toil, pain, care, and life shall cease; and then we shall see that 'the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed;' and shall say—

'Our Jesus hath done all things well.'

"I most sincerely wish you a happy new year."

Mr. HENLEY loved to entertain clear and definite ideas of the heavenly world. He frequently spent much time in thinking on this subject, not as an intellectual exercise, not to indulge the cravings of a vain curiosity, but in sacred anticipation of the reward which he hoped for, and as a means of quickening his soul to pursue that holiness which alone could qualify him to possess it. At such times faith would seem to lend to his soul a second sight, enabling him to pierce the veil of mortality, and to behold in all their cloudless lustre the blissful realities of the world to come. His views of the force and meaning of passages of the word of God descriptive of heaven, were peculiarly brilliant and striking; and while in conversation with his friends, he dwelt, as he loved to do, upon themes like this, there was often a solemnity in his manner, a depth in his tones, a lustre in his eye, which told how absorbing was the interest which they awakened, and which at once awed and delighted all who heard him.

Many, indeed, who looked at his pale sunken cheek and attenuated frame, listened to conversations such as these with mournful interest, as indicating that he was ripening for and fast hastening to the possession of the bliss of which he spoke. Shortly before his death he read with great satisfaction a sermon of Dr. Chalmers, on "He that is unjust, &c.;" and the following passage he marked with a pencil, and spoke of as being in harmony with his own ideas:—"There may be palms of triumph, there may be crowns of unfading lustre, there may be pavements of emerald, and rivers of pleasure, and groves of surpassing loveliness, and palaces of delight, and high arches in heaven which may ring with sweetest melody; but, mainly and essentially, it is a moral glory which is lighted up there; it is virtue which blooms and is immortal there; it is the goodness by which the spirits of the holy are regulated there; that it is which forms the beatitude of eternity."

This Mr. HENLEY anticipated, and this he already in some degree enjoyed. *He "knew in part."* He carried it about with him. It was his heaven to know his Father reconciled, to hold communion with Him, and to do His holy will.

On the 7th of January of this year, part of his family were preserved from imminent danger in a very remarkable manner. It happened during that night that there was a furious storm; and an immense stone chimney belonging to his house fell through the roof, carrying with it the rafters, &c., into a room where two of his children and a servant were sleeping. The bedstead was crushed to pieces, and several large stones fell on the bed, some within an inch or two of the pillow, but most providentially they all escaped uninjured. "HE gave his angels charge concerning" them. Mr. H. never after omitted to devote the anniversary of that day especially to God.

He took fresh cold on this memorable occasion, in consequence of exposure to the night air, and was thrown back; but as the spring advanced, his health considerably improved, and continued better for some time.

The Conference of this year was distinguished by

the commemoration of the Centenary of Methodism. The Rev. Thomas Jackson, the President, delivered a sermon on this occasion by the appointment of the preceding Conference, of which Mr. H. makes the following mention.

"Liverpool, August, 1839.

"Heard the Ex-president's centenary sermon, having returned from Manchester in time. It was such an one as can only be expected to be heard once in a century. It was *worthy* of the *great* occasion. Simple, plain, full, evangelical, spiritual, *powerful, eloquent.* The unction that accompanied its delivery was extraordinary. The chapel was crowded to excess, as you may suppose. The prayer meetings were also well attended, and a powerful and gracious influence rested on the congregations."

In December of this year, Mr. H.'s family were called to sustain a domestic bereavement in the loss of a little girl who was tenderly endeared to them. She had evinced a peculiarly amiable disposition, and a sacred reverence for divine things quite uncommon in one so young. Her illness was long, and her sufferings exceedingly severe. From the first, her medical attendant had pronounced her recovery impossible; and knowing this, the sight of her protracted and extreme suffering almost overwhelmed her afflicted parents, and led them to pray for her release. She had manifested an extraordinary passion for music, and the day before her death the chords of a musical instrument had aroused and delighted her exceedingly, from which she soon relapsed into insensibility, and after this gradually and calmly sunk into the arms of death.

Her sufferings had endeared her a hundred-fold to her parents; and in his last moments she was remembered and referred to by her father. As he leaned over her peaceful remains on the morning of her death, he said, "Now our precious girl is on 'The Martyr's Isle'" (in allusion to a work entitled 'An Autumn Dream,' which he greatly admired); and in his last hour, referring to this, he said with visible delight, "Our treasured *martyr* will be mine to take charge of in heaven!"

During this winter the ministers of the two circuits in Sheffield, concerned at witnessing the rapid and successful diffusion of popish errors, determined on delivering a series of lectures in the principal chapels in the town, on the leading points of the Roman Catholic controversy. Two of these were delivered by Mr. H., the subject of one being "Justification by faith in opposition to justification by works," and the other "The Popish doctrine of mortal and venial sins." In the preparation of these he took considerable pains, and they were regarded as evincing a correct acquaintance with the points at issue, and great logical acumen and skill. The course of lectures excited general attention, and was of service in promoting the cause of truth.

The state of the circuit during the year was, on the whole, satisfactory. Though in consequence of the depression of trade, much distress existed among the lower classes, (a state of things which is too generally found to be unfavourable to religion,) yet both the congregations and societies maintained their numbers; and there were not wanting cheering indications of spiritual prosperity.

Mr. HENLEY continued to pursue the ordinary routine of ministerial duty, carefully avoiding unnecessary exposure, and generally enjoying tolerable health. He suffered, however, frequent attacks of indisposition, which proved that nothing but extreme caution could enable him to continue in the work at all.

Mention has already been made of his passionate love for music and poetry. He was a correct and tasteful performer on several instruments, and composed many airs possessing real and acknowledged merit. He also wrote several poetical pieces, which evinced that had he cultivated the muse he might have risen far above mediocrity. But very few of his compositions have been preserved, and many of his friends will doubtless be gratified if some specimens be rescued from oblivion.

The following was writtten and set to music by himself for a Sunday School:—

"HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!"

1. Children of Jerusalem
Sang the praise of Jesu's name;
Children too of modern days
Join to sing the Saviour's praise.
CHORUS.—Hark! while infant voices sing
Loud Hosannas to our King!

CHOIR.

2. What sweet sounds are these we hear,
Charming every tuneful ear?
How melodious is the strain
From this numerous infant train!
CHORUS.—Hark, &c.

CHILDREN.

3. Have ye not in scripture read
What the royal Psalmist said—
Telling of Messiah's days,
"Babes shall give thee perfect praise?"
CHORUS.—Hark, &c.

4. Come, let every infant tongue
Join and swell the grateful song;
Sweeter, higher, let us sing
Loud Hosannas to our King.
CHORUS.—Hark, &c.

CHOIR.

5. Parents, Teachers, old and young,
All unite and swell the song;
Higher and yet higher rise,
Let the chorus rend the skies.
CHORUS.—Hark! while infant voices sing
Loud Hosannas to our King!

Both the words and music of the above have been printed in various collections, as well as published on a separate sheet; and it was performed some years ago in the Cathedral of Exeter, by the choir and children of the schools in that city, before the Bishop, who was affected to tears while listening to it.

It may not be unpleasing to the intelligent reader to subjoin another specimen or two of the poetical effusions of Mr. HENLEY, which were written during his residence in Sheffield. The former was inscribed in the album of a friend, to whom he was equally indebted and endeared.

May the bright beams of love divine,
From heaven descending,
With all their influence benign,
Upon thy heart with lustre shine,
Thy steps attending,

Through all thy pilgrimage below,
To cheer and guide thee;
And then, howe'er life's current flow,
No dark despair thy soul shall know,
No ill betide thee.

And when the toil, and care, and pain
Of life are o'er;
Then may thy spirit rise and reign,
And range the bright celestial plain
For evermore!

The other was addressed to a little boy, the son of the friend already mentioned.

"KNOW THOU THE GOD OF THY FATHER, ETC."—1 CHRON. XXVIII., 9.

Know thou the God of thy father, my boy,
And serve Him in spirit and truth;
For a searcher of hearts is the Lord Most High,
O! make Him the Guide of thy youth!

If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee,
And will never forsake thee—never;
But if thou depart from the Lord, then He
Will cast thee off for ever!

Then give Him thine heart in thine earliest days,
And, whate'er on earth betide thee,
He will kindly direct thee in all thy ways,
And safely to glory guide thee!

Many similar compositions to the above are in the possession of his friends; and, when it is considered that they were the unpremeditated effusions of a moment, written without pains and seldom corrected, they evince a talent which would have well rewarded cultivation. But he had no ambition to share the earthly poet's laurel: it was his nobler passion to teach to perishing sinners the songs of Zion, and to awaken in the bosom of the children of wretchedness the celestial harmony of holy gratitude and heavenly love.

The following letter was addressed to a relative who was believed to be in a fatal illness:—

"Sheffield, September, 1840.

"I am glad and thankful that you are earnestly seeking that only effectual comfort in the prospect of death, 'Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' O! what a mercy to have such a Saviour to apply to in the time of need—a Saviour who is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession. If you have not yet realized the inward assurance of forgiveness, you have only to believe for it. There is but one simple condition of salvation, and it is faith;—faith *alone*: and this faith is not some mysterious difficult thing; it is a simply casting yourself, as a lost helpless sinner, on the merits of Christ for salvation. If you feel your own sinfulness and unworthiness, and that in yourself, and of yourself, and in all your past life, you have nothing to trust in—nothing to recommend you to the favour of God—nothing to plead:—then this is all the fitness required, and there only wants an act of trust in the sufferings and death of the Son of God. Jesus Christ hath loved you and given Himself for you. He was wounded for your sins and bruised for your iniquities. O! believe, believe the record true! Believe that Christ is yours. He is yours if you believe it; your wisdom, righteousness, your sanctification and redemption. It is my earnest prayer that you may

'Read your title clear
To mansions in the skies.'

O! how all-important and all-absorbing is religion in the prospect of death. It is this alone that can give patience and fortitude under sufferings. This alone can give true resignation to the divine will for life or death. And this takes away the sting of death, by inspiring the hope of glory. I shall be happy to hear that you are enabled to rejoice in a sin-pardoning God, and can contemplate death without terror through faith in him who is the resurrection and the life.

"It is unquestionably painful to be separated from those we love below. You will feel at leaving your husband and children; and they will feel it a painful

separation: but this sorrow is lessened in proportion as you have the scriptural hope of meeting in heaven. You must endeavour to cast every care on Him who careth for you and leave your dear family with God. It is often the case that the affliction and death of one member of a family, is the means of spiritual and eternal good to all the survivors.

"I hope my cousin seeks support and consolation under this domestic affliction from on high, and that it will be both to him and to your children the means of bringing them nearer to God and leading to a decided and unreserved consecration to His service."

"Torquay, September 6, 1840.

"To ——

"I trust you are better, and recovering your spirits. O! do endeavour to look up and cheer up. Look to the great source of comfort and strength. 'He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.' 'He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; but will bring forth judgment unto victory.' Try to encourage yourself in the Lord. However mysterious and peculiar may be your feelings, God your heavenly Father, and Christ your sympathizing High Priest, know the whole thoroughly, and how to succour and relieve. 'We have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.'"

It will be seen by this and many subsequent letters, that Mr. HENLEY knew how to "cheer the faint." He had ever a word of comfort for the afflicted, whether of the mind or body, and could distinguish a bright spot on which to fix the eye of faith. Despondency was unknown to him. In any case of trial, the word of God was his resting place. "If I find one promise that suits me," he would say, "it is enough; only let me see that God has written it, and I could not, I think, I *really could not* doubt, if I would." It might truly be said, unbelief had no lodgment in his heart. He was always happy—always cheerful. He enjoyed life as he passed along: it was not with him, as with many, a looking to

the future. His disposition was not light or trifling; levity was unnatural to him;—it would have sat uneasily upon him: but he was the antipodes of gloom, and he had a great objection to the semblance of it in christians.

The popish controversy excited much attention at this time, and Mr. H. was deeply interested in it.

The following letter expresses his estimate of one of the most distinguished champions of protestantism of the day.

"Sheffield, December 10, 1840.

"It is a long time, my dear friends, since I wrote you; and really it is not now because I have leisure that I begin a letter, but you will perhaps think me negligent if I do not pen at least a few lines.

"I never was busier, I think, than I have lately been. Last week, for instance, I was so engaged in various committees and public meetings, ticket givings, and so on, that I had not one single half day in my study. Nearly the whole of one day was spent, as you perhaps would say, if I may judge from a recent letter, worse than unprofitably, in attending a great protestant meeting, and listening to M'Ghee. But have you heard him for yourself? I think not, or you would not thus speak. He is, for a public speaker on an exciting topic, the farthest from a mere declaimer of almost any talented agitator I have heard. Few—very few public speakers are so carefully exact, and so evidently determined to advance nothing without proof. He is a man of facts, documents, and arguments, that appeal to the understandings and judgment of his hearers. Once he was imposed on, but he was the *first* to inform the public through the papers in which his speech had been reported. I do assure you I do not consider that the three hours spent in listening to his statements were mis-spent time. He is a man of genuine eloquence—clear, consecutive, convincing, powerful. I doubt not that he is doing the very work to which God has called him, and for which he is so eminently qualified."

Mr. HENLEY had a sincere respect for superior talents or acquirements, especially when consecrated to

the service of God, readily acknowledging their existence, and manifesting affectionate esteem for their possessors. While he entertained a very modest estimate of his own qualifications, he rejoiced in the greater honour placed upon others. Envy of superior merit, and that spirit of detraction which is its habitual concomitant, had no place in his bosom. To employ the language of one of his intelligent and attached colleagues, (Rev. Mr. Hurt,) "He possessed a truly noble and generous mind and was immeasurably elevated above petty jealousies and feelings of envy toward others. He would rejoice in the superior talents and acceptableness of his brethren, and was never chargeable with the meanness of attempting to disparage them in the esteem of others. Character was most sacred in his estimation. No man was a more determined foe to evil speaking than Mr. HENLEY." Indeed, he would not allow an absent person to be spoken ill of in his presence. He would at once repress any attempts of this kind, by enquiring, "Have you told him this yourself? I shall think it my duty to do so if the subject be not dropped." One evening when at a friend's house in Sheffield, the conversation turned on the character of an individual, of whose conduct Mr. H. himself strongly disapproved. It was scarcely mentioned, however, before he interrupted the conversation, and in a good natured way said, "Well, now, we will finish what we have to say about him when he himself is present." It was pleasantly said of him, by some of his friends in Sheffield, that he was Solicitor-General for both Circuits. Yet, on the other hand, few were more faithful in reproving what he believed to be wrong. Of this, all who knew him, even his dearest friends, have been personal witnesses. To adopt again the language of Mr. Hurt, "He was remarkable for the frankness and fearlessness of his disposition. In the maintenance of truth, and in administering reproof where he deemed it necessary, he feared the face of no man. He was never deterred from prosecuting the path of duty by apprehension of consequences. Indeed, I have sometimes thought that his rigidly inflexible adherence to principle and conviction led him to speak unguardedly and with needless

severity. But this was by no means the result of malignity of feeling, or because he delighted in harshness. He had no pleasure in inflicting pain upon others. He was benevolent and kind-hearted in a high degree, but inflexible in the fulfilment of what he was convinced to be his duty."

Mr. HENLEY formed a class of young men in Sheffield, as he had also done in other towns, whom he met once a week for religious and intellectual improvement. Indeed, as his health was much restored, he resumed to a great extent his wonted activity. He preached occasionally out of doors, was very diligent in visiting the sick, and was strictly attentive to every part of the accustomed duties of a Wesleyan minister. But this required constant caution and watchfulness, as any extraordinary exertion was inevitably followed by new attacks of disease.

One of his attached friends at Sheffield remarks:—

"As it regards Mr. H.'s preaching, it was useful beyond what will be known in the present world. Not so much, perhaps, in reference to the conversion of sinners while in Sheffield, as the building up of believers. I never received so much benefit under the ministry of any man; and my experience is that of all with whom I have conversed on this subject. I know many who were awakened under him, and doubt not but there are numbers more, had I the means of ascertaining; but the amount of good realized by the people of God was incalculable. I shall never forget the interesting conversations I have had with him on many points of theology; and often has my mind been exceedingly impressed with the clearness of his views, the firmness of his faith, and the strong desire he had to fix right sentiments on the minds of those with whom he associated. In reference to visiting the sick, he did a great deal more than he had strength to do: he seemed always to be employed in this way. I never saw before, I have not seen since, one so exemplary in his attention to the poor and sick."

The following extract of a letter to one of his most intimate friends appears to deserve a place in this memorial.

"February 1st, 1841.

"Your enquiries and complainings concerning the want of unction and success, equal to what you formerly experienced in your ministry, I can quite enter into and sympathize with. Often have I had great searchings of heart on the same subject; and whenever such is the state of things with us, there should be doubtless close self-examination, and diligent search to ascertain the cause. It may not, however, be always with ourselves. The Saviour's ministry was not always equally successful; neither was that of the apostles. There are times of special visitation to churches and congregations; and there are seasons when for unfaithfulness the grieved Spirit is partially withdrawn—judicially so. How otherwise is it to be accounted for, that the same ministry actually for substance—the same sermon preached by the same individual man within a brief interval, to different congregations, will produce such different effects? I have witnessed this in this circuit. I have, in a part of the circuit where we have had a gracious outpouring of the Spirit, preached with such freedom, and power, that the word has seemed to carry all before it; and shortly after have preached the same sermon to another congregation, where, though I have not been conscious of having suffered any loss in my soul, any diminution of either zeal or piety, and have been as solicitous to be useful as in the former instance, the same power has not attended, and the same success has not followed. In such cases we must leave it with the Lord. At the same time, we must not be indifferent to success or failure. When we are not successful, it is our duty to search for the cause; and whether it be with ourselves or with the people, we should deeply lament it, and by humiliation, penitence, and importunate prayer, as well as by increasing fidelity and diligence, seek its removal."

Towards the close of March he caught a severe cold, and was quite an invalid for months. Although he fulfilled his regular work, he often felt very unfit for it. Influenza returned upon him, and induced much languor. But nothing would satisfy him, if he were able to leave his room, but taking his regular appointments.

On one Thursday particularly, he was seized with violent spasms. An attack of this kind was usually so severe, that he did not recover it for a week; on this occasion he remained in bed until the following Sabbath, on which it was his appointment in the country, and he "felt persuaded that a good day's labour would be the very best thing for him." By half-past eight, he was on his way to Woodhouse, a distance of seven miles. And when in the evening he returned, on getting out of the gig, he cheerfully remarked to Mrs. Henley:—"I do assure you I was quite right; I am worth a hundred pounds more than I was when I set off in the morning."

The approach of Conference admonished Mr. H. to prepare to take his departure from Sheffield. Though his labours in this town had borne no comparison with those of his earlier days, yet God had graciously honoured his ministry in the conversion and edification of many. By the societies generally he was beloved and esteemed, and some of them were among his most endeared friends. The three years which he had spent there had been passed in harmony and peace, and he contemplated his removal with sincere regret. His attention had been directed to several places for the ensuing year; and it may afford some proof of the estimation in which he was held in the connexion, to mention, that when he was about to leave Dudley, nearly thirty invitations were sent him from different Quarterly Meetings, signed by their respective stewards; and on this occasion a considerable number of similar applications were made to him. He had not, however, engaged to accept of any, but awaited the decision of the Conference.

The following extract is from a letter written during its session.

"Manchester, August, 1841.

"I have been waiting to communicate some information as to our future appointment; but the stationing commitee has not yet re-assembled, so that no alteration has been made. It will, I believe, be C—— or M——, and I am not very anxious which; the advantages and disadvantages are so nearly balanced, that I should

shrink from the responsibility of deciding myself. The M—— friends are, however, doing what they can to get me appointed there, and I think they will succeed."

"Manchester, August 6, 1841.

"I have just heard that we are down for Manchester. Let us 'leave it, leave it all with Him.' It will be all right. We need not be afraid about our health; if we come here, God will take care of us. I have done nothing in effecting the change. I had waived every movement, but it is well. I dared not take upon me the responsibility of objecting to Camborne. I felt to shrink from that, and only requested that it might be fully stated I had acted faithfully in the matter.

"Again let us feel 'He doeth all things well.' I have no fear at all about my *own* health. I have been better since I came than for a long time before."

The Rev. John Morgan, speaking of this Conference, says:—"I expressed my fears lest his coming to Manchester should shorten his days. I had preached in that part of the town where he expected to reside, and was convinced that the state of things was such as would allow no rest to his mind or body; but he thought it was his providential path. But, alas! though all is well as it respects himself, yet for thousands my fears have proved too well founded. Hence the intelligence of his death, though painful, was not surprising."

In the middle of August he left Sheffield, with part of his family, for the south of England, in order to gain a little rest, preparatory to entering on his new scene of labour.

His health had on the whole improved during his residence there; and every thing which the kindness of his friends could suggest, was done to promote its re-establishment and to contribute to his comfort. The affectionate attention paid him by some individuals especially, called forth his warmest acknowledgments. Nor will the reflection be to these excellent persons a source of little gratification, that it was their privilege to cheer the last years of so honoured a servant of the Most High, to minister to his comfort during his mortal sickness, and to impart the consolation of friendly sympathy to his dying hours.

CHAP. XI.

"DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY."—1 COR., XV., 54.

Manchester—Apparently improved Health—Letter to his Sister —To Mrs. H.—Devotional Fervour—Letter—Extract—Splendid Chapels—Letter—Domestic Happines—Exposure—Illness —Lovefeast on Christmas-day—Cheetham Hill—Derby—Sheffield—Letter—Preaches his last Sermon—Radcliffe Close—Increasing Illness—Journey to Weymouth—Glorious and triumphant Death. 1841—2.

In the first week in September, Mr. HENLEY removed to the first Manchester circuit, to which he had been appointed by the Conference.

His residence was in Oldham Road, near Wesley chapel, and in an open airy situation. Mrs. Henley and part of their family were prevented by indisposition from immediately joining him, but did so in the early part of the following month. He was received by the society in Manchester with great cordiality, and entered with cheerfulness upon the duties of the circuit, fondly anticipating, as did also his friends, a year of happy and successful labour. To describe how soon and fatally this flattering prospect was overcast, and his invaluable life brought to a premature close, is the melancholy subject of this chapter. It has been deemed best to give this part of the narrative in the words of Mrs. Henley, whose constant attendance upon her lamented husband, during this mournful period, peculiarly qualifies her to describe it.

During the first few weeks after his entrance on his new circuit, he was fully engaged; but as his health (as must have been obvious to every one who knew him) had much improved, he thought himself capable of accomplishing as much as he ever had done,

and expressed himself as being as strong as in his early days, and as having the pleasing conviction that a gracious Providence had allotted to him a long career of labour and usefulness in the church and in the world.

In writing to his sister, a few days after his arrival, he gives some account of his movements.

To this beloved relative he was warmly attached, and deeply concerned about her best interests.

"September 6th, 1841.

"You, my dear sister, shall have my first letter to Devonshire, to atone for the *supposed* slight you received, in that your last was answered only by one to Sister ——. So now I balance the account with you, and shall expect to hear in acknowledgment soon. We arrived on Saturday night, a day later than I purposed, in consequence of delay at Bristol. Our dear boys and servants had reached on Friday, all well.

"Yesterday morning I opened my commission in this circuit, at Cheetham Hill. I was exceedingly pleased with the punctuality of the attendance. I began within two minutes of the time, and the chapel was nearly full. My text was, 'Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified.' At night, preached at Oldham-street. As far as I have seen the people, I like them, and hope I shall be useful and happy among them.

"And now, my dear Anna, allow me a word of counsel on the best things. You are not a stranger to deep religious impressions, nor to religious joys. There was a time when religion was all in all with you; and the pleasure of devotion and the smile of heaven made you happy. But is it so with you now? Are you, my dear girl, walking in the light of God's countenance and living in communion with Him? If so, how can you remain out of society, and neglect the ordinances, christian communion, and the Lord's supper? Now let me beg you to write me freely. I very much fear that you have gradually fallen into a state of careless indifference, and are now living without God in the world; I mean not utterly destitute of the fear of God, but without the enjoyment of His presence and

favour. If this be the case, O how awfully must you have grieved the Holy Spirit! How ungratefully have you acted towards that Spirit, who so graciously strove with you in your childhood!

"Remember, my dear girl, you are answerable to God for all your religious privileges, and all those gracious influences of which you have been the subject. If you have, by omission of duty, by habitual neglect, or by a trifling spirit, grieved God, your state is a very perilous one; and if you can, in this state of religous declension, go on comfortably and at ease, that does but make your danger the greater. The longer you remain so, the less probability that you will ever be restored. O, then, go at once to the mercy seat! Plead again the blood that makes the wounded whole; and rest not till you are restored to the joys of salvation. Give yourself to God and to the church. Resolve from this moment for Him to live and die. Write soon to your affectionate brother.

"JOHN."

His affection for young people generally was great; and in many instances he has been the means of communicating lasting good. The amount of this will not be known until he meets these ransomed ones at God's right hand. Several young men now in the ministry owe to his instrumentality their conversion to God.

The family were now anxiously anticipating their reunion, and in reference to this he thus writes:—

"I have seen a good part of the circuit, and I think we have every reason to anticipate comfort and happiness. The people are exceedingly kind; our situation is airy, and I believe healthful. We are all longing to have you with us again. May the Pilgrim's Guide be with you, and give you 'journeying mercies.' This is a very convenient and comprehensive expression, and, though an old and common-place one, is well worth keeping. Take courage; the Captain of Israel's host will be with you, and bring you safe hither. How often has He been better than your boding fears! We pray for you at our domestic altar daily, and the children

join me in asking God to send 'dear mamma' home to us soon in health again. Oh! how I long to be once more altogether, in our own happy home. I cannot be settled till then."

It was his custom to pray frequently for each member of his family separately, when we surrounded the altar, and many such seasons will never be forgotten. The distant and dear were brought before God, and fervent and warm were the breathings of his heart for blessings on their individual cases. His whole soul went out with the expressions of his lips. One morning he was pleading with God for an absent one, and so intense were his aspirations, and such was his spiritual agony, that he fainted away, and it was some time before he recovered. Family prayer was never with him passed lightly over. If it were possible, he would have every member of the household present; and latterly it had been his usual plan to assemble his little circle before the evening's appointment, that all the children might be present before they retired for the night.

During the greater part of his stay at Sheffield, he had generally met, at the house of one of his friends, some of his esteemed colleagues and a select circle nearly every week, and these evenings he highly prized; they were to him most agreeable, and among his happiest seasons. He delighted in nothing so much as conversation upon sacred things. He had a fine mind, and metaphysical powers of no common order. Those who knew him well could not but discover that he was not an every-day character. He made no pretensions to literature, though he might have ranked high had this been the object of his study; but he aimed only at being a holy and efficient minister of the gospel of the blessed God. To be "about his Master's work," to use his own words, was all his delight; and every thing else was made subservient to this. He valued intellect, and knew how to appreciate the society of the literary as much as any man living; nay, he loved it, and could he conscientiously have sought it more frequently, he would have done so; but the burden of souls was laid upon him, and he seemed to have no alternative.

In early life, he had laboured under many disadvantages in reference to the improvement of his mind; but he was no loiterer; he had risen by his own unassisted effort, and he bought up every fragment of time. As in his boyish days, so in later life, he was seldom to be seen without a book, and he had the power of abstraction in a great degree; he could follow out a train of thought when passing a crowded street in a large town, perhaps as uninterruptedly as though quite alone in his own study. But to return.

To the friend just spoken of the next letter is addressed; and, in allusion to the scenes and events of by-gone days, as they rose up before the mind, he observes:—

"My dear Brother,—I am not disposed to let you forget, all at once at least, that there exists, and in the body, one with whom you have broken a lance in theological controversy; and with whom you have still more frequently, in our little Saturday evening's tea party, held free and friendly converse on doctrines, sermons, &c. I really feel the loss of these exceedingly; among the many good things which made Sheffield East pleasant, and which make my removal painful, these meetings are neither last nor least. However, I have no reason to complain. The friends here are exceedingly kind, and I think I have a fair prospect of comfort and usefulness. I sincerely sympathize with you all in the bereavement you have sustained in the death of your preacher. Poor Mrs. Strawe! what a stroke it must be for her. May the great High Priest comfort and sustain her!"

The Rev. Mr. Strawe had followed Mr. Henley in the Sheffield East Circuit, but was soon after taken in typhus fever, and in three weeks from his entrance on the circuit, died in triumph. How mercifully is the future with God alone; and He, kindly caring for our weakness, assures us that 'sufficient to the day is the evil thereof,' and that for the morrow grace shall be proportioned.

On the 25th of the same month, Mr. H. writes to friends in sickness.

"I hope all these infirmities and afflictions will be sanctified. When they promote self-examination, and, by causing us to feel how much we need divine consolation, make our prayers more frequent and more fervent, they cannot fail to be advantageous. They become the means, through the supply and teaching of the Spirit, of producing greater deadness to the world and greater spirituality of mind. I feel assured that He who has evidently sanctified past sufferings, will cause all things to work together for good.

"I have every reason to be pleased with my circuit, except that there are many discouragements with regard to the work of God. The state of trade causes many removals, and the extreme poverty that is occasioned operates very injuriously. Our congregations are, however, improving; and we are hoping for good. Our house is everything we could wish, but for situation; and that is much better than we expected to find it. It is open and airy enough, and I hope we shall find it healthy. I have been quite well since I came; freer from any symptoms of stomach complaint than I have been for many months before. The children and Agnes are also well. How merciful has God been to us with regard to the harvest! After making us to feel our helplessness and dependence on Him, He has withdrawn the threatening clouds and caused the heavens to shine. 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness!'"

It was Mr. HENLEY'S custom to make frequent and grateful mention of his daily mercies, and he often remarked that "because of the commonness of them, we too generally pass them by unnoticed."

"October 6.

"Oh for gratitude! All my family once more with me. My dear wife and Lilla came on Saturday last. I am thankful to say my M. is better for her journey. We shall now feel at home. What earthly wish have I ungratified? O to get nearer to God! Lord, help me! While I write, the fire kindles—my heart begins to glow—my faith increases. Glory to God! I shall—unfaithful as I have been—I shall all his fulness prove.

'The bliss of those that fully dwell,
Fully in God believe;
'Tis more than angel tongue can tell,
Or angel mind conceive.'

O to dwell in God! To bask in the sun-light of His face, and to feel every emotion of the heart God-ward, every affection hallowed, every temper Christ-like! Then will every word be seasoned with grace, and every action be acceptable to Him, whose smile of approbation constitutes a heaven on earth. God has honoured me in placing me with such colleagues. We shall, I believe, be like-minded with regard to the work, and be truly fellow-labourers.

"The people are very kind. We are low to begin with, in consequence of great distress in trade. We are, however, determined not to despair, and I think we have already some auspicious signs."

A letter received about this time from a friend who was justly dear to Mr. H., afforded him much pleasure. Some extracts are inserted, along with his reply.

The writer had been referring to "splendid chapels," to which he rather objected; and noticing one which had just then been opened, and in which Mr. H. was much interested, as being in a former circuit of his, he says:—

"I understand Mr. —— gave £1,000 as his subscription, and £10 at each opening service (fifteen in number). This was truly noble. He seems to make a good use of his property—an exception to the general rule. I used to think I gave as much as with my large family I ought; but now I have doubts as to the correctness of this notion, for I have certainly put my 'wages into bags having holes,' and it has fallen out as fast as put in. However, I have not diminished my givings to God's cause on this account, and I do not intend to." Alluding again to the chapel, he goes on to say:—"Well, notwithstanding what I have written, I *think* and *believe*, and am convinced *from my heart*, that there is no form in which christianity is or has been exhibited to the world since the apostolic days, so much in accordance as Methodism with *apostolic polity;* or so well calculated to carry the triumphs of

the gospel throughout the world. A steady and continuous looking into the subject has produced this conviction upon my mind.

"But with all the excellence of our polity, and with all the guards and internal as well as external provisions for its stability (and it looks like a citadel built upon a rock) yet it may not be invulnerable; and if there be any assailable side, it will be that of *conformity to the world.* Perhaps an over jealousy for its success, and the gloomy feelings of a nervous mind, may tend to this train of thought. But this has been the rock on which, perhaps I may say, every section of the christian church that has fallen into decay has split. Should our polity be proof against it, nothing, humanly speaking, can prevent Methodism from eventually overspreading the world."

The accompanying is but a short extract from Mr. Henley's reply:—

"November 4, 1841.

"My dear Brother,—I was delighted to recognize your hand-writing once more. Your long and very interesting epistle deserves a longer reply than I fear I shall now be able to send. We were glad to hear of your being so much better, and sincerely pray that you may continue free from that mental depression which is so afflicting and distressing. My dear —— has suffered greatly from a similar cause for months past, and at intervals for two years; but I am thankful to say she has been much better since her return from the south. I can, however, fully believe, from what I have seen in ——'s case, that an affliction of this kind is far more distressing than mere bodily disease, however severe.

"I cannot say much for the prosperity of Methodism in Manchester at present. The state of trade and want of employment operate greatly to our disadvantage; yet we have peace, and some signs of prosperity. Our congregations are improved and improving. Our societies are, I think, generally in a healthy state; and we are gathering a few members. My colleagues are all of one mind. I think I shall be very happy with them. Mr. Newton is, of course, very popular—draws large con-

gregations. We have him only on Sundays: from Monday to Saturday he is travelling and labouring for the connexion. Of Mr. Taylor I need not speak;—you know him; and Mr. Cooper is a pious and devoted man;—as a preacher instructive and persuasive, and as a pastor judicious and exceedingly laborious. If we have our health, and God make us useful, we shall be very comfortable. I have been better since coming here than I have been before *since* my affliction at Tipton, more than four years ago; and at present we are all well, and I believe we are in the path of Providence, and that is the place in which to have the largest share of human happiness. I need not tell you that I quite agree with you in your opinion of Wesleyan Methodism. I believe it to be, as a whole, the purest form of christianity in the world. That there is danger of degenerating, there can be no question; every thing that is depending, partly at least, on the fidelity of free agents, must be so far liable to degenerate; but I question whether there ever was a time when *there was less danger than at present.* I am not so sensitive as some people on the subject of splendid chapels. My idea is that there has been a great deal more of sin in wealthy Methodists dwelling 'in ceiled houses' whilst the house of God has been allowed to 'lie waste.' I think it quite proper that His house should be equal to those of the worshippers; and I should say, if the people could afford to pay for it, there is nothing extravagant in having the pew as well furnished as the best room in the house. Certainly, God gave instructions for the most costly and splendid ornaments in His house, and was pleased with the people for their large and numerous offerings. It might be pleaded that the unnecessary expense would be better employed in sending the gospel to the heathen: that I admit, but that is changing the ground of the objection, and in reply to *that* it might be said, 1st, that it is very unlikely the money saved by having a plain instead of an embellished chapel would be appropriated to other religious purposes: 2nd, that if we are to practice economy, as I think we should, in order to be able to give the more to spread the gospel, it should be done uniformly,

and not by making the house of God plainer than our own: 3rd, that, after all, something is due to the appearance of the sanctuary; and when our Saviour commended the woman for anointing Him with the precious and costly ointment, on the ground that, though it might have been sold for two hundred pence and given to the poor, yet this act was an expression of love and respect for Him, and she had therefore 'wrought a good work;' I think there is in the language of our Lord on that occasion the recognition of a principle that will go far to vindicate a little liberality in shewing respect to the house of God by contributing to its adornment. But I regard your fear to originate in pure love to Methodism and solicitude for its welfare. Thus you have a godly jealousy, and the constitutional temperament of your mind leads you to look the dark side. And then, apart from this, there is a conservatism natural to us all, which, in proportion as it prevails, will induce us to dread modern innovations."

Mr. HENLEY'S warm attachment to his friends at Sheffield, had experienced no diminution from change of residence. He still felt as interested in their interests, and as concerned for Zion's prosperity with them, as he had ever done when amongst them; and when separated he desired nothing more than to promote it. He was anxious that all should do something for God, and had repeatedly urged, when at Sheffield, that the friend to whom the following letter of encouragement is addressed should become a class-leader, to which ultimately, with great timidity and fear, she had consented.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am glad to hear that you have taken my advice, and determined to take up the cross you have been so long reasoning about. You have an encouraging beginning, I think; and I doubt not will get a good class. That you feel your own unworthiness is one important qualification for the work; only let not this weigh you down, but make you more diligent in your efforts, that so you may make up for any deficiencies you see in yourself, and be the more fervent in prayer and more entirely dependent on God

for success. 'When I am weak, then I am strong.' You have nothing to fear from want of qualifications, if you only faithfully use such as you possess, and live near to God. He will bless you, and make you a blessing. You must guard also against being discouraged, if sometimes you are disappointed in the hopes of new members, or if few are present. Persevere, and be not weary in well doing. You may be tempted to fear that if they had some other leader they would attend better; but never allow yourself to be harrassed by thoughts of this kind. Do your best, and then leave the result with God. With reference to new members, let them not rest short of the gospel hope, a clear sense of pardon. Do not allow them to come to class from week to week the subjects merely of desires and hopes, without distinctly urging them to make sure work for eternity, and press into the kingdom. And *even old members* have need to be frequently questioned as to their enjoyment of the abiding witness. I know a leader who makes it a rule to ask each one every month, 'Do you *now* possess the witness of the Spirit?' And then urge such as enjoy the favour of God to 'go on to perfection.' You must not think that if you do not experience this blessing you cannot press it on others. Why not? If you believe the doctrine of entire sanctification, you can, if not living in the enjoyment of it yourself, tell them that you are seeking it, and exhort them to be like-minded.

"Yet there will be a great advantage if you at once claim a full salvation, and be a living witness that sin is all destroyed. We were glad to see Mr. T—— and to hear of our old friends. Pray write soon, and tell me especially how you are getting on with your new class, and how you are prospering in your own soul. We have signs of good in several parts of our circuit. Our congregations are improved, and many have been added. I have several new members in my class; and we are hoping for an outpouring of the Spirit. Yours affectionately,

"JOHN HENLEY."

The last months of this year were more than happy

in all respects. His health had so improved, that from his coming to Manchester it had been uninterrupted. His journey to the southern coast had done him much good, so that he felt invigorated in mind and body, and appeared remarkably well. The prospect promised all that could be desired.

He had often expressed himself as feeling more at home than he had previously done in any circuit in so short a time. His constitutional disposition being retiring, it had taken generally a longer period to feel thus; but a sense of duty, and a heart incapable of suspicion, united with great simplicity and candour, had led him to cultivate manners of unreserve on first meeting new friends. He felt highly honoured in being stationed with such colleagues. He lived, too, in a very high degree in the spirit of prayer. Frequently, on my entering his study, his first words would be, "Now, then, let us spend a few minutes on our knees together; I feel as if I could for ever hold converse with our best Friend. He has given me, unworthy as I am, to know something of the meaning of that word, 'Pray without ceasing.'" "Wherever I am," he said one day, "'My soul waiteth upon God.'" And truly it was so. Feelings may express themselves without the guise of language. The heart often speaks for itself, and needs no aid from the tongue. When the spirit holds converse with Deity, and the soul is drawn out in prayer, then how clearly do we perceive, in the subdued and hallowed fervour which pervades the whole character, the meaning of those words. So it was with my devoted husband. And he could and did literally "rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks." Naturally he was cheerful, and religion increased this happy state of mind.

If "the darkest hour be next the dawn," so often does the most joyous precede the severest trials. Now the sky was cloudless. How can this be "the heritage of tears?" was again and again asked in our little circle. His language was—

"O call not earth a barren spot;
Pass it not ungrateful by;
'Tis to a man a lovely lot,
Though a lovelier rests on high."

This was life's sunniest day. But these bright scenes were delusive. The sun went down while it was yet day. He, my beloved one, was just maturing for more extensive usefulness; his judgment becoming sounder; his experience in the things of God deeper; his views of the great responsibility of his office more enlarged; his influence likely to be more extensive. Indeed, it seemed to human ken as if he were just now beginning to live. The changing scenes to which, as a Wesleyan Minister, he was subjected, at all times acted as a stimulus to that energy which is so necessary to ensure progress and success; and whilst it marked the lapse of time and warned him of its swiftness, it was calculated to institute examination and incite to fresh exertion. This year it appeared unusually the case. But the path of our Father, God, was "in the great waters."

"He plants his footsteps in the sea."

About the middle and toward the end of December, Mr. HENLEY had much extra labour in visiting and relieving the suffering poor in his neighbourhood. The weather was extremely cold and wet; and during the Christmas week he scarcely knew what rest was. The sight of human misery, such as he had scarcely ever seen before, as to amount, both in a temporal and spiritual sense, depressed him exceedingly, so that he could not sleep; and on one occasion so much affected him, that he said he feared the continuation of it would be more than he could bear. He investigated the cases of many hundreds of families, and, while thus engaged, caught a severe cold. At first he apprehended nothing more than simple rheumatism, with which he had occasionally been slightly and rather singularly attacked in former illnesses; and the cough he assured himself was not at all connected with the lungs, but merely bronchial irritation: he frequently had the uvula touched with caustic, and this usually relieved him, so that there appeared no cause for alarm.

On Christmas-day he preached twice, and in the afternoon held a lovefeast at Oldham-street chapel. Many who loved him will remember his intense breath-

ings after God on that occasion;—how he strove to take hold of his strength;—how his soul followed hard after Him, until he had well nigh sunk from exhaustion. He remarked some weeks after that season to a friend, that he had never recovered that service: he felt that he had exerted himself beyond his strength, and never lost the pain which had then been induced.

At the Watchnight, at the close of the year, he was present from eleven until the close. He conducted the service himself; but he really ought not to have gone out.

He often complained of great langour; and as the winter passed on his cough became troublesome, and he suffered much from spasmodic attacks in the stomach; but no entreaties would induce him to rest for a week.

The friends at Cheetham Hill thought a temporary residence there would do him good, and they were very solicitous he should go. About the middle of February he accepted their kind invitation, and went to spend a few days with them. He preached only once, and that on the Sabbath eve, from "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This proved to be his last sermon at Cheetham.

He abode with our highly esteemed friends, William Allen, Esq., and his truly kind and sympathising lady, where he received every attention. On Tuesday evening he came into the town to attend some meeting, but he felt too ill to return, and so much worse that from that night he was not out of bed for more than a week. His medical attendants, however, appeared to apprehend nothing serious, but thought proper treatment and rest would bring him about again. He one day remarked, in reference to the service just noticed:—"The friends at Cheetham Hill will say I am soon called to prove the truth of the assertion of my text; but to desire the crown without the conflict—to wish to share the reward of victory without sharing the toils and sufferings of warfare, would be mean and cowardly." At this time he was much reduced by medicine. His disease was supposed to be in the stomach. He, however,

got up slowly after this, though to his own apprehension he was recovering rapidly.

In the early part of March, he was advised to leave home, and travel for a few weeks for the benefit of change of air. Accordingly, on the 19th, he left for Derby, and on the evening of the same day he says in a letter:—

"I arrived safe at our dear friends'. Mr. and Mrs. German received me most affectionately. I felt it to be a long journey and tiresome, which I suppose was occasioned by the inconvenience of remaining in one position, for we were full, and I had scarcely room to move, so that the pain in my back was great."

Again on the 21st, he writes:—

"I attended the Missionary Meeting this morning. We had two good speeches. Mr. —— was truly intellectual, beautiful, and eloquent; he fully redeemed himself. Mr. —— also was quite at home, and gave us an interesting, animated, and telling speech. I am remaining at home to-night as the safest plan, lest I should get cold, and so have cause to blame myself. Again let me assure you that I have every attention kindness can dictate. I am going on well. The friends say I look better already, but must stay a month. What say you to that? I shall soon return to you in full health and strength. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! We will praise Him together."

"March 24, 1842.

"Praised be God, I am better every day; only the pain in my foot, of which I told you, causing a little lameness, rather keeps me back. I shall be rejoiced to return to you again next week, I hope quite recovered. I think I feel not only patience, but cheerfulness and resignation under this affliction, and trust I shall profit under the chastening rod, and come forth from the furnace as gold tried in the fire. I have every attention and comfort I can desire from this kind family; and all around me are anxious for my recovery. My appetite is good—cough gone—sleep well, and I gain strength. Tell the dear children they must pray for papa to get well."

For some years my dear husband had preached the chapel anniversary sermons on the Good-Friday, at Findern, in the Derby circuit; and at this season he felt very solicitous to attempt at least one service. His valued friend, Mr. German, took him in his gig, and on his return he observes in a letter:—

"I preached without any inconvenience a short sermon. The ride to Findern has done me good. And now you will unite with me in singing that favourite and truly beautiful hymn—

'He dies! the Friend of sinners dies!
Lo! Salem's daughters weep around.
A solemn darkness veils the skies;
A sudden trembling shakes the ground!

'Come, saints, and drop a tear or two
On the dear bosom of your God!
He shed a thousand drops for you,
A thousand drops of richer blood.'"

And then, in reply to some fears that had been expressed, and which originated solely in consequence of the languor obviously induced in him by disease, he goes on to say:—

"You have been quite mistaken in your opinion, that my mind has been more depressed under this affliction than usual. I have felt more like cheerful resignation than I ever recollect to have felt before; and certainly I never was so little troubled or concerned about being laid aside from the work. To tell you the truth, I have felt so easy about it, that I began seriously to enquire whether my zeal had not declined; however, I hope I have not less zeal, but more faith in God, and a more perfect resignation. Neither have I entertained desponding feelings with regard to speedy recovery. I believe I shall in another week be fit to enter on my full work, and with caution to hold on my way, waxing stronger and stronger. My chief fear about the work is, that Mr. Taylor will, in consequence of my being away, attempt too much, and be ill again. How much are we indebted to that dear kind friend. May God reward him a thousand fold! By this day week, I hope to be with you *in propria persona*. For the present you must accept this poor substitute of a letter."

The anniversary of his birth-day was on the 28th, when he writes:—

"I was right glad to receive your threefold letter, and sincerely do I thank you for all your affectionate congratulations. My health is improving—my spirits good—my soul is *very happy* in God; and on this, my natal day,

'I bless the day that I was born.'

Rejoice then, and praise the Lord with and for me. And now, my too kind—too anxious Mary, do believe me when I assure you I really am very much better. Within an hour I am setting off for Sheffield. 'The Lord be with you!'"

"March 30, 1842.

"Yours cheered me exceedingly. I hastily devoured its contents. I am decidedly better every day. To God be all the praise! Love to the children. I long to be with you again."

On the 1st of April he reached home, evidently improved, though not to that degree we desired. His cough had returned in some measure, and he had generally pain in the stomach, with great langour. When the weather permitted, he walked daily; and he went to Bolton and spent a day or two with his early and beloved friend, Mr. Avery.

The day usually set apart as a fast by our societies at this season was noticed particularly by him as one of humiliation before God.

On the 10th of April he preached in the morning at Wesley chapel, from "It is good for me that I was afflicted." To be in his work again afforded him great pleasure. In the afternoon he visited a dying man who wished to see him.

He drew lessons of gratitude from every event, asking, "Why should we faint? Oh! let us 'repress each murmuring sigh.' 'Whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth.' Let us meet afflictions valiantly. 'In the world,' it is said, 'ye shall have tribulation.' God hath been mindful of us, and He will bless us."

The following is an extract from the last letter he

wrote, with the exception of short notes written during his visit to Radcliffe. It is dated April 12th, and was addressed to old and beloved friends.

"I have delayed writing, my dear friends, that I may be better able to give my opinion of this new production of Dr. Harris, at your request. I am not prepared to say much, as I have been moving about to Derby, Borrowash, and Sheffield, since I have been getting better. I dare not sit to close reading much at a time. As far as I have gone, I must say, I am greatly impressed with its excellence. Its perusal has done my soul good; every paragraph warms my heart and quickens my zeal for God.

"And now, how are you both? We were truly grieved to hear such discouraging accounts of ——; but trust the future will be more favourable.

"As for me, I am better, and recovering strength; but more slowly, I think, this time than ever before. I shall have to use great caution in every respect, for my stomach complaint still clings to me, and is, I fear, likely to do so. I hope it may be moderated and ameliorated, so that I may continue in the work. I have only preached once since my return to Manchester; and shall not, I suppose, try again till Sunday next, and then only once. I trust I can say my affliction has been sanctified. I have felt nothing contrary to cheerful resignation. My —— unites in affection to you both. Yours very affectionately,

"JOHN HENLEY."

On the 19th Mr. HENLEY preached at Wesley chapel, on regeneration. It was his last sermon. He was entreated to accept the offer of a brother minister to take his place; but his desire to meet the congregation could not be overcome. He did not feel injured by the service, and, on leaving the chapel, remarked, "You must not complain of me; I did not exceed three-quarters of an hour, and you know I am stronger than I was last Sabbath. I feel not at all more tired than usual on such occasions, and next Sunday I hope to take my full work." This was a relief to his mind; he had ex-

pressed himself as being so useless, that he longed again to minister in holy things. On Monday the weather was exceedingly hot and oppressive, and induced extreme debility and prostration. He, however, thought this change in him only the result of preaching, and that as he was so weak he expected to feel rather fatigued; but he quite calculated that a week in the country was all that was necessary to restore him. Mrs. Bealey, of Radcliffe Close, had kindly requested him to visit her, and on this day he returned with her in her carriage.

Only such can know who have drunk of the same draught of sorrow, what it is to be wearied between the alternations of hope and fear, in cases of pulmonary disease. The fluctuations of a day present the patient in such varied lights, and even to the unsuspecting friend impress the mind with a sadness which cannot be thrown aside. The brilliant eye, the vermillion cheek, though they look undying, seem to point to a more permanent home, as though too bright for earth.

From day to day he sent cheering accounts of his apparent improvement whilst at Radcliffe Close. On the 19th he writes:—

"I have only time to say I have had a good night. This morning I was afraid of sick head-ache; but it has passed off. This is a lovely place, and I have no doubt I shall derive good. I feel quite at home, and have everything I can wish."

"20TH.—I am exceedingly grieved that you should be so distressingly anxious. I assure you there is no cause. I have good nights, and am certainly gaining strength. My cough, it is true, has not gone; but I have scarcely had any pain since I left you, and do not feel that extreme prostration, nor that uncommon disposition to sit still. I feel as though I could walk in the garden and grounds all day long. The weather is delightful, and the air of the village seems to me very mild and pure. I believe I shall get great benefit from the visit. Yesterday, at the earnest request of Mrs. Bealey, I consulted Mr. Goodlad on my case. He

suggests a visit to Matlock, and thinks the use of the saline water would be the best thing for me. I have every attention and comfort. Mrs. B.'s kindness is beyond every thing.

"Well, my own ——, we have continually new mercies to be thankful for. Praise the Lord! I think my soul grows in gratitude and confidence; and I sincerely rejoice that you are encouraging yourself in the Lord, notwithstanding your tendency to be cast down."

"21ST.—Mr. Goodlad has seen me again to-day. He positively prohibits all preaching until I am very much stronger, and is anxious that I should go to Matlock or Weymouth: this he thinks indispensable. I am improving every day. My cough, though troublesome, is not so bad as it has been; but that is of little consequence, as my chest is sound, and I have no pain in it. Trust in the Lord and all will be well."

"24TH.—My appetite is better to day than for several days. The weather being very fine, I keep out as much as possible. O how I wish you were here to enjoy these walks with me! Now, my Mary, shall we go to Matlock or Weymouth for a few weeks? The sea air might be best. Mr. G. thinks so, if it agree with me. But the fact is, I feel so much better this evening, that I have not decided that it will be necessary to go to either place."

"25TH.—Yours to day has revived me. I am, indeed, grateful that you are in better spirits. I cannot tell you how well I feel this morning. To-morrow I hope to see you face to face. Cheer up: we shall yet rejoice together."

Thus my precious husband became the comforter. He was invariably the same cheerful, happy, grateful friend.

My fears had been ever alive. It is true the thought of consumption had never once crossed my mind; but the extreme langour and weakness he had suffered from had influenced his otherwise active mind, as well as body, and his still manner had caused constant alarm.

On the Saturday morning he returned in Mrs. Bea-

ley's carriage from Radcliffe, where he had met with kindness most disinterested, and which will never be forgotten. It has been said that "coming events cast their shadows before them." The first sight of my dear Mr. HENLEY I shall never forget. Five days had done the work of months. The surprise was so great that it took some minutes to recover. He seemed to understand the look—the feeling, and felt it; but he rallied immediately, and was still the comforter. "Forgive me if I ask," he said, "that for my sake you will strive to be cheerful. Supposing the worst, all will be well for both, though we cannot understand it now; but there is a heart that is touched and a voice that shall speak with power, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord.' Yet still I believe I shall recover and be in full work again." In reply to a question whether he had any misgivings whilst at Radcliffe; he once had, he said, when alone in the grounds, asked himself the question, "Can this be consumption? and for ten minutes, not more, the past, present, and future, crowded upon my mind, and my dear family came before me; but I looked to God, and it passed away as a dream."

His happy voice dispelled my own fears too. He made preparatory arrangements for our journey, particularly in reference to the children, for whose comfort and improvement he was very solicitous; and in the evening appeared in comparative health. With his accustomed kindness, he said he would prove how strong he really was, by taking my place at the tea table, as he thought I looked fatigued.

On the day following was the Sabbath: he was too ill to attend the public services at all, but was very anxious to be present at the administration of the Sacrament, which service the Rev. Joseph Taylor, his invaluable Superintendent, conducted. A chair was placed for him by the communion table. This was the last time he entered the earthly courts.

It was urged by Mr. H.'s medical friends, that he should try sea air immediately; and the Wednesday following was fixed on to commence the journey.

His old and dear friend, Mr. Avery, came to spend a

day or two with us on the Monday; and this exhilarated him. During the morning, his respected colleague, the Rev. Peter Cooper, took him a few miles into the country, and on the Tuesday also; but the second day he felt extremely exhausted from the ride, and on his return requested to be left alone for a time, as the least sound affected him. He revived, however, astonishingly, and on the following day was up by six o'clock. When ready to leave his room, he said, "Now, let us alone commend each other and our dear children to our Father's care, and all will be well." He had named some books he wished to have placed in his carpet bag and now was prepared for commencing his formidable journey. He rose from family prayer, which was conducted by the Rev. Joseph Taylor, and passed into the nursery to kiss for the last time his then almost orphaned children. But he was full of hope. His attentive and kind medical adviser had early in the morning ordered a carriage bed to be ready for him, but he preferred setting out without. We were attended to the station by those who loved him well. At Birmingham, he was so well that he took a little beef. He was constantly praising God for his goodness towards him. It was of no moment who were with him either in the room or in the carriage: God was present, and he "must praise him," he said, "aloud." We reached London with comparatively little fatigue; and at the house of our friends, Mr. and Mrs. John Corderoy, from whom we received all the attention that affection could dictate, remained for the night.

Mr. H. was anxious to proceed, as he thought every day lost that kept him from the sea air. From thence we proceeded by train to Southampton, and here again we found, in the christian sympathy and attention of Mr. Laishley and his family, a soothing ingredient in this cup of sorrow. In the evening we reached Poole, and at the house of our brother, Rev. William Henley, remained a few days. Whilst here, Mr. H. walked frequently in the garden, and took occasional rides in the neighbourhood. The following Monday was the birthday of his eldest child: he spoke much of him, and devoted a portion of the day to especial prayer, as he

usually had done at such seasons. He pleaded fervently for this boy, that he might live to bless the day that he was born, and be a comfort to his mother.

We left Poole for Weymouth towards noon, which we reached with far less inconvenience than could have been expected. The medical men who were consulted gave hope that the summer would restore him. He had particularly requested them to give him their opinion, pointedly asking the question, "Do you conceive my disease hopeless? I should be much obliged for a candid reply. We both wish to know the worst, and I have no fear of death, so that I could not be injured by a knowledge of the fact."

It may not be out of place to remark, that some time previous to this, when one day dining out with some friends in Manchester, one of whom was a medical man, the conversation turned on a case of consumption, then a patient of the gentleman present. Some questions were proposed as to whether the patient's knowledge of the certainty of a fatal termination would accelerate its approach. Mr. Henley expressed himself warmly on the subject, and said it would grieve him exceedingly, were it his case, not to be dealt faithfully with, feeling confident that it would rather benefit than harm him.

From the Tuesday, when Mr. H. dined with the family, he was enjoined to be kept quiet and see no one, and he did not afterwards leave the drawing-room and adjoining bed-room. All pain in the stomach had ceased when we quitted home; so that now he was quite free, and his cough appeared to be the only cause of suffering. He was full of sanguine expectation that he should be speedily restored now that he could enjoy the bracing sea breezes, and be able to walk to chapel (a distance of half-a-mile) within a fortnight. Those who have seen consumption will not wonder that hope was in vigorous exercise. Fluctuations most flattering buoy up the patient and those around him, though to others who stand by these very changes tell the hopelessness of the case. But the rapidity with which after this he sank, surprised even his medical friends.

On Thursday morning, a letter from his beloved Superintendent was very gratifying to him. He wrote,

"The manner in which prayer is made for you and yours, by the friends, would do your heart good to hear it. Last Friday and Sunday, the congregations joined most heartily at the throne of grace for you, and I believe that you are remembered daily, alone and in their families." To Mr. Taylor he had felt warmly and gratefully attached. There were many reasons why it could not be otherwise. The sympathy which he manifested during his illness, and his care to relieve him from his duties and to promote his comfort, were great indeed, and deserved his warmest acknowledgments. On reading the letter just spoken of, he fervently expressed his gratitude, and said, "I shall owe my life, under God, to Mr. Taylor; and I shall ever love him for his deep interest in my welfare." He was exceedingly cheerful the greater part of the day, and talked with confidence of returning to his work. He shrunk from the idea of becoming a Supernumerary for a year, and smilingly said, "I do assure you, you would be truly sorry if such were the case; for I fear I should make the cessation from labour as uncomfortable to you as to myself. The very thought of inactivity is painful. I have often prayed that, if it be the Lord's will, I may 'cease at once to work and live:' but," he added with emphasis, "I believe he will hear me in this, and I shall not need such rest." It is in mercy that much of the future is wisely hidden from our view; or we should be unfitted for actual duty, and sink under the apprehension of to-morrow's ills.

In the afternoon my dear husband had been wheeled to the window in an easy chair, and some passing occurrence brought the poor before him. "And now," said he, "let us examine how we stand in reference to the poor. It is a long time since we settled this account and we must recollect that we are getting deeply in debt. A portion is due to them for all the kindness received during my illness." He had annually devoted a certain amount to this purpose, and he was never satisfied unless convinced that he had *exceeded* that sum. To the cause of God, too, he thought it the duty of the head of a family to give in just proportion. Should only one or two be members of the church, more was

required of them; but if several, the amount should be divided; and on this principle he invariably acted in his own house.

Towards the afternoon, after sleeping a little, he awoke rather suddenly, exclaiming, "What is this? Oh! tell me what are these feelings? They are blissful. Oh! it is perfect bliss. This sinking into God—can this be death? Surely not. Would that I could convey an idea of my state." For a few minutes he was still, as if recovering from surprise, and recollecting himself he said, "Perhaps it will be better for me soon to go to bed. I think this blessed visit has changed me. I feel more prostrate, and, my Mary, if I should leave you quite suddenly, I had better be in bed." After tea he rallied a little; but when he leaned on my arm as he passed into the next room, his countenance beamed with heavenly sweetness, and he said "Oh! what a visit of love was that! It was overpowering. I felt that I could bear but little more, or I had gone. It *was* bliss."

On Friday he appeared much better, though not able to walk about the room. He revived when breathing the sea air, and watching its motion as wave followed wave underneath his window; and again he talked of getting better, and seemed to expect it. He dozed a great deal, and in sleep was constantly talking, but God was in all his thoughts.

On Saturday he was considerably weaker. Gently was his Heavenly Father dealing with him. He had occasional returns of prostration, and always accompanied with ecstatic bliss as on the Thursday.

Many times a day he desired me to pray with him. It had been requested by the professional men that he should not attempt to speak, nor to see any one, not even his brother ministers. After they had left, he said, "They do not understand my case. I am sure a visit from Mr. Button would do me good. He is now my pastor, and let me beg he may never be allowed to leave the house without seeing me." This day a sensible difference was perceptible in him, and he was asked if he still thought he should recover? "Yes," was his reply; "why should I waver about it? I have no promise

from God to that effect, but I have a conviction on my own mind that I shall yet live to labour for Him many years; and as the medical men have said my case is within the power of medicine, I see no reason why I should doubt."

At his request some portions of scripture, and hymns which he named, were read to him. At this time it is probable that the truth of the future began to pass before him; but though he had misgivings, he did his utmost to conceal them, fearing to give pain; for, after listening awhile, he begged me to "close, for just now recollections of home steal over me, and we neither of us can bear any more." He thought, no doubt, on his almost fatherless ones, and our great distance from them; for he asked for a pen, and wrote the name of his second boy in a small bible. It was evidently a trial of faith, but no expression ever passed his lips at any one time of aught but gratitude and love. A hundred times a day the same words were uttered, "Praise the Lord!"

On the Sabbath morning, it was with much difficulty that he could dress. When just about to leave the room, he enquired, as if his memory had failed, "Is this Sunday?" and, on being replied to in the affirmative, he said, "Do, then, please to assist me in taking off my dressing gown, and give me my best coat I would ever honour the Lord's-day." The Sabbath had always been a day of delight to him. There was nothing put on in his manner—no appearance of any thing like gloom; but every word and action indicated that he had laid aside earthly concerns.

He was considerably weaker this morning, and passed into the drawing-room tremblingly, and rested on a couch near the window. He requested to have some psalms read to him, which he pointed out. At intervals he repeated with peculiar emphasis parts of the hymn commencing—

"The God of Abraham praise."

These words he quoted again and again—

"He calls a worm his friend;
He calls himself *my* God;
And He shall save me to the end,
Through Jesu's blood."

Through the day he was not able to talk much, and could only speak in a whisper. A friend who had called to see him asked how he felt? His answer was "Very, very happy, but very ill: pray for me." His voice was then so low that he could scarcely be heard.

During the afternoon Mr. Shepherd, an old friend from Sheffield paid him a visit. This was an unlooked-for gratification, and though he was not able to articulate a word distinctly at the time from extreme weakness, it gave him great pleasure; and he afterwards spoke of his friend, and the kindness which prompted him to extend his journey on purpose to such a distance, with deep feeling.

His gratitude for every attention shewn him was great, and he frequently said, "How shall I repay you! Oh, I will pray that Jesus may reward you. Surely no one has so many mercies—so much to fill him with love as I have."

He retired early in the evening, and, though repeatedly urged, could not be induced to allow any one to sit up with him, nor could he rest until he was satisfied that all were in bed. About two o'clock he awoke in a state of perfect rapture. The remembrance of that season can never pass away. He entered on the subject of his past experience, and retraced the way by which God had led him, particularly dwelling on the last years of his life; and then, in triumphant language exclaimed—

'O Love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in thee!
Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me;
While Jesu's blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries.'

It was a season of sweet communion, to be perpetuated in eternity. He expressed no misgivings—no doubts—no enquiry as to who would protect, after he had left them, those who were so dear to his heart. All fears were allayed, and it seemed as though he heard a voice "from the excellent glory" pronouncing—"Leave thy fatherless children: I will preserve them alive." His

recollection was as clear as ever in his life; but, "the light of eternity" had dawned upon him. "Now," said he, "let us read a few verses out of the best book; and oh! we will record the loving kindness of the Lord, and blessed be His holy name for ever."

He slept a little towards five o'clock; but soon awoke and exclaimed—"I am going—I am going to glory! Jesus calls!

'I shall behold His face;
I shall His power adore;
And sing the wonders of his grace
For evermore.'"

Until this night my beloved husband had never expressed a doubt of his recovery, so that this was to me perfectly astonishing; but neither now nor afterwards did he utter a sentence of surprise at the sudden change that had come over him. He might have been looking for the last messenger, from the readiness with which he appeared to receive him, rather than have been expecting recovery; but he proved in death, as he had for many years in life, the truth of his profession, that his own will was lost in the will of God; and none who had intercourse with him, and knew his spirit, could question the veracity of his statement.

But he now thought he was on the wing for heaven, and for nearly an hour was carried beyond himself, so as at length to be scarcely able to speak. He had not expected "to have gone quite so soon" he said; "but it is all glory!"

After this he revived, and felt so much better, that, when taking a little milk, he said, "Who can tell—perhaps the Lord may even after this restore me, as he did Isaac to Abraham. He is trying our faith."

When the medical men called in about 11 o'clock, he held out his hand to the physician, exclaiming, with a look of heaven, "Well, Doctor, I had no idea of seeing you again; I thought this morning I was going home to glory." He was dissuaded from attempting to leave his bed, as the weather was cold. It was a happy day. Many times his eyes were filled with tears, and when asked, "Does anything oppress you?" he an-

swered, "O no!—O no!—they are tears of delight: I am full—full of heaven."

He spoke of his children, and said, "I should love to press them to my heart again." It was said, "He will do all things well." He replied instantly, "*He doth* all things well."

About eight in the evening he was taken worse, and when the surgeon came he explained his feelings himself, expressing a willingness to take anything that was advised, but giving it as his opinion that it would be of no benefit to him. He held my hand, and said, "My precious, it is all over; but welcome death! I am going to my Father and your Father, my God and your God. All is right! I have prayed much for you, and have strong confidence that the Lord will support you. God *will* bless you, and be with you and our dear little ones wherever you go; and I shall be with you, whether you stay here, or go elsewhere, as your ministering spirit. The Lord will permit this."

He was very restless during the night, continually talking in his sleep, as he had during the last week often done; but of this he was aware, and begged to be awakened if he wandered, which he had occasionally done. His constant theme was sanctification; and never, but in one instance, had ought but of God escaped his lips. He was preaching, praying, then speaking to seekers of salvation, and urging, in the most earnest manner and with uplifted hand, sanctification on those who heard him; but if he were only spoken to in a whisper, it would bring him to recollection; and this was often done, lest he should exhaust himself.

As the morning dawned (Tuesday), it became apparent that his end drew near. "Now," he said, "I do think I am going;" and to some one who was near, pointing upwards, he said, Look! do you not see the angels?" At another time he said, "I have not served God as I might—as I ought; but for many years I have enjoyed entire sanctification, and now, glory be to his name, Christ is precious—*very precious!* 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Oh! how important it is to obtain a full salvation, in order to enjoy a large measure of glory in heaven. Who would like to lose any-

thing of the bliss, the glory of heaven? Who would be satisfied with merely escaping an eternity of woe? O, to be near the throne!" And then after a few moments, he added, "Precious Saviour! *My Saviour!* A universal Saviour! A Saviour for the vilest sinner! 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.'

'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.'"

Kindling into sacred ecstacy, he shouted with an energy and power of voice amazing to those who had witnessed the previous prostration of his physical strength—"Glory! glory! glory! Victory! victory! Hallelujah! hallelujah!" And then, beseeching all around to unite with him, he exclaimed, "Shout! shout! shout! May I shout as loud as I like? Shall I disturb the family?" His voice was heard all through the house. Repeatedly he said, "This is the happiest day of my life. Not for ten thousand worlds would I have had any other death than this? I never expected such a death as this. O! live to Christ. Who would not live to Christ to die like this? I never expected such a death. I expected to die in peace; but this—this is beyond all I could have conceived of. I had not thought it possible for a worm to experience so much of bliss." Alluding to his children, it was asked, do you think they will all get to heaven? He seemed surprised at the question. "Get to heaven. Oh! yes. I could not doubt for a moment but that my children should get to heaven. It seems an easy thing to believe. We have been a happy family on earth, and we shall be an unbroken one in heaven, to be separated no more for ever."

About twelve o'clock he took an oyster and a little lemonade, saying he had not thought he should have taken any more until he reached his Father's kingdom. Once the cough threatened suffocation, but with his accustomed confidence in God he distinctly repeated, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob."

From the beginning to the end of his affliction a moment of sadness was not seen or known, nor does

the writer believe a temptation of any kind was permitted to assail him. During this morning he repeated with much emotion, as if the language of his soul—

"Vital spark of heavenly flame!"

When he came to

"O the pain—the bliss of dying!"

He suddenly paused and said, "No—not pain, there is no pain in my case. It is all happiness—all bliss! Heaven is here! Jesus is here! Angels are here! I shall soon be at home. I have enjoyed very many happy hours in my Master's service, and now I am going home to sing praises unto Him who hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood." And then he requested those around him to unite with him, and with his deep toned voice, as in health, he sung—

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee," &c.

Here was a complete victory over the last enemy. The promise of "an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom," was fully verified.

As the hour of his departure approached, his countenance beamed with ecstacy, and every feature declared the triumph of his soul. Within a quarter of an hour of his exit, he again spoke of his family—his "fatherless ones;" and appealing to some surrounding friends, pleaded for love and protection for them. He continued waving his hands and praising God, repeatedly exclaiming, as though the beatified vision on which he gazed would pass away and leave him, "Stay! stay! stay!" and then, without a lengthened or difficult respiration, his spirit passed into the presence of his God, on Tuesday afternoon, May 10th, 1842.

During that season it seemed but of little importance what were the sorrows or the joys of life; but a "little moment," and we shall together wave the palm of victory, and gaze on our crucified Lord.

"I will not say 'Farewell!' since thou dost come
To visit me, and we may yet enjoy
Communion sweet together, and with Him
Who ransomed both; I at the footstool,
Thou before the throne."

Such was the death of JOHN HENLEY. The God whom he had so faithfully served, forsook him not in the mortal hour. The gloomy valley was irradiated with the presence of his Lord. Over death he was more than conqueror. His experience exemplified the Divine faithfulness to the promise which has been selected as the motto of this work, "Them that honour Me I will honour." He had honoured God by the unreserved consecration of all his powers to His service; and God honoured him, by entrusting him with a dispensation of the gospel—crowning his ministry with eminent success—cheering his declining days with the abundant consolations of His Spirit, and giving him a signal triumph over the last enemy; and the eye of faith may follow his spirit to the realms of bliss, and behold him crowned with glory and honour, where "they that be wise shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

To the delineation of his character supplied in the preceding pages, nothing need be added. Enough has been said to exhibit the fervour and consistency of his piety, the devotion of his spirit, and his burning zeal for the glory of God;—enough to present a bright example for the imitation of the humble believer, and to magnify the riches of redeeming grace.

His mortal remains are deposited in the churchyard of Wyke, near Weymouth, where a tablet is erected to his memory.

The End.

J. SHERREN, PRINTER, WEYMOUTH.